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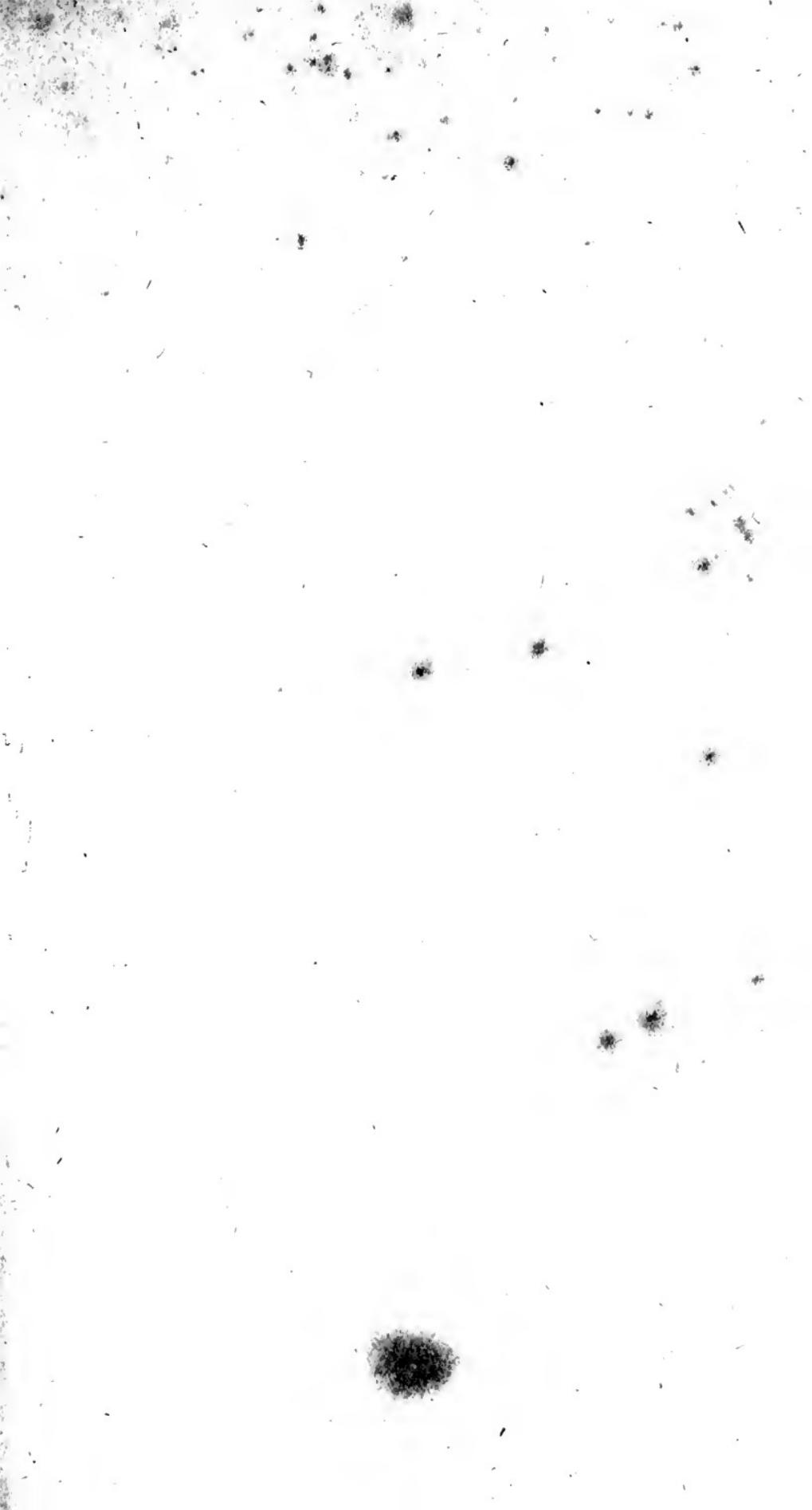
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THE
HUT AND THE CASTLE;
A ROMANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROMANCE OF THE PYRENEES;"
"SANTO SEBASTIANO; OR, THE YOUNG PROTECTOR," &c.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE

HUT AND THE CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

OUR travellers reached their place of destination without accident or adventure; but the night being one of piercing wind, sleet, and rain, added no small portion of gloom to the first impression made by the dwelling they were come to inhabit.

Menroy Castle had once been a structure of some consequence, but two sides of its quadrangle had yielded to the power of time, and fallen into ruin: the other two, however, maintained their ground in tolerable condition, and contained sitting rooms and chambers in good order; though the black oaken wainscoting floors, and small Gothic windows,

threw a sombre shade over every apartment ; yet those who had no cheerful home felt most sensibly that they had just reason to be thankful even for such an asylum.

" Our furniture, you perceive," said Sir Frederick Bolingbroke with a smile, after having greeted our three shivering travellers with the cordial of a sincere welcome, " has not been preserved in the keep of the castle ; but when these veterans, which have combated with the wear and tear of the rough warrior Time, are aided by our camp stores, and by what I have ordered Russet to procure for us, I trust we may, with a little effort, become reconciled to Menroy Castle."

An excellent plain dinner, neatly arranged, presented comforts in the domestic department, which the castle, in its present state, did not evince.

" It being necessary for Nettlethorp's speculations and mine," said Sir Frederick, " to retain an active hind, or factotum, luckily the one we have procured has a wife, the possessor of the culinary talents which our board exhibits."

Upon reverting to the arrangement of bedrooms, Nettlethorp said : —

“ We have allotted the haunted chamber to you, Fauconberg, because of your famous ally Carlo ; for, whether the threatened visitation be natural or preternatural, Carlo will prove a useful auxiliary.”

“ Neither Carlo nor his master can have the smallest objection to the arrangement, provided Cameron can have a contiguous chamber,” returned Fauconberg, remembering his promise to his mysterious friend ; “ for we managed in conjunction so well, when stormed by banditti, that we might again hope for success against the sprites who may invade us.”

“ By the way, Cameron, what have you done with the two famous dogs you brought to England ? They would prove powerful allies in our impending invasion,” said Marchmont.

“ I have sent them to the friend for whom they were purchased,” Cameron replied, in a tone of suppressed emotion, as his pale countenance blanched to a more death-like hue, the

gloom of internal agony throwing a momentary cloud over his brow.

"But it is necessary that I should be enlightened as to the species of visitation I am threatened with," said Albert hastily, and anxious to turn observation from the mysterious agitation of poor Cameron.

"Why," responded Sir Frederick, "tradition states, that an ancestor of mine, who, in days of other times, inhabited this castle, was so active a patron of decapitation, that now, during certain moon-light seasons, the surrounding moat swells up with an influx of headless trunks, which march up in a formidable phalanx to seek their heads in that particular turret which Nettlethorp has kindly recommended for your accommodation. And absurd as such a legend is, Russet and his whole family are absolutely so infected by superstitious folly, that during their short residence in the castle, and stinted for room as they were by the adoption of the measure, they forsook that alarming turret altogether."

"But pray," demanded Marchmont, "are these headless tribes the only society to be met with at Menroy?"

"What you want society, youngster!" exclaimed Nettlethorp. "Are not Apollo and the lady Muses sufficient society for you? If they cannot introduce freaks enough into your noddle, you must souse your fancy in the moat, or trail her ladyship through the surrounding ruins: you could no where be supplied with a more genial combination for balladmongery."

"Marchmont has given up all idea of entering the field of authorship under the banners of the Muses," said Fauconberg. "No, he forsakes them for ———"

"For their rival magpies, I presume," said Nettlethorp.

"Not exactly, Mr. Pungent!" returned Marchmont. "I am going to flourish the pen as a novel-writer, for the express purpose of portraying you in your shag, just marched out of your winter quarters in a hollow tree, to treat young ladies with something new: a Caliban in love!"

“What, boy, in the face of the reviewers, bring forth such an uncouth monster!”

“The reviewers can be no intimidation to me,” returned Marchmont, endeavouring at the achievement of a firm voice, though his heart beat tremulously at the very name. “You cannot suppose they would degrade their vocation with pages so insignificant as mine.”

“Why, boy, have you not, by goading your Pegasus through Grub Street, mounted up amongst the poets, and entitled yourself to be scarified or larded?”

“The man’s fuddled, or muddled!” exclaimed Marchmont. “What poetry have I committed?”

“Why, your epic murder in blank verse, boy.”

“Blank enough,” returned Marchmont good-humouredly; “but the blank, my sapient, was a *carte blanche*, never filled up by one flash even of poetic fire. But seriously, Nettly, why should I fear the reviewers? The powerful will not attack the weak! What lion would crush a mouse?”

"Why, a British lion! The British critic, or British ———"

"The British critic!!! None can fear severity from a *British* critic," returned Marchmont, his heart in no very tranquil state of pulsation as he spoke.

"Really! How does that appear?"

"In his name, sir, which guarantees the mercy 'that droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven.' A *British* critic, sir, is one to reverence, not to fear. A *British* critic, sir, must be not more profound in science than merciful in judgment to fulfil his duties; and, like the sun of encouragement, yield his cheering beams to every shoot of promise he desries. No, sir, a *British* critic would never wound merely because he possessed the power. He would not, through the inspiration of malice, present to the public eye an inattractive, though requisite passage in a structure, as the only specimen of its architecture. No, sir, in the genial nature of a Briton, he would rather present its best pro-

portions. ‘‘Besides, sir, the British critic does not usually condescend to the review of novels or romances ; and, as a *British* critic, he, whilst acting under that exalted name, would not surely turn out of his accustomed steady course of science to act as a cruel blight upon a lowly shrub of fancy ; nor strive, like the sirocco’s blast, to wither it with a noxious breath, and deprive a fellow being of his bread.”

At length the necessary separation for sleep led Fauconberg to the chamber of haunted fame which he was to occupy, and to which he was attended by Dermod, who, the moment his master, with Cameron, had entered a small sort of antechamber which separated their rooms, bolted the door of it, as he said —

“ I hope your honours no offence in my meditating the presumption of stretching myself and mattress in this supernumerary nook of the waste-lands of ould ancient architecture, just to be making up the nate number of our garrison, though on my safe conscience, wid

some increase of strength, that kept off the legions of Ramirez, divils ; and also to be in readiness here, wid my pistols and phosphorus matches, to be a sentry on the watch for the visitor who is to come unknownct to us as we sleep. And sure, if we proved equal to be keeping ould squintibus and his imps at bay so elegantly in their own dominions, it would be a hard case if here, upon English ground, we would not be an overmatch for one woman, and that same widout a tongue!"

"Without a tongue!" exclaimed Albert, smiling. "Oh, then, if thus assured that the dame of the 'Imperial Crown' is not our expected visitor, I shall enter my terrific chamber undismayed."

"Ough, faith, your honour, but it is not quite and clane sure we are of having got shut of Madam Dolfuss; bekease she may be brought on our backs yet, as the very culprit who has obviously gottin the lost goods that can't be found; for they say that Turk of a baron, whose heart was as barren of mercy as his castle of comforts, what does he do, the

monster ! but *ough*, murder ! orders the tongue of a beautiful young lady to be chopped out of her head, bekease she naturally out-talked him and his parrot to boot ; so, your honours, ever since herself comes here, whin the rising of the headless trunks swells up the moat, to scould the baron for his cruelty, and to ax for her tongue, which she cannot be agreeable to herself widout."

" Well, then, we can at once exorcise the unquiet spirit of the poor aggrieved soul, by giving her information where her lost property may certainly be found," said Fauconberg.
" But as to your making this your dormitory, my kind Dermod, it is out of the question. Why, you would in a week's time lose the use of your limbs here by rheumatic affection."

" O faith, master dear, the affection of gratitude would keep me too warm to fear harrum from any other. Is it lose the use of my thumping limbs ! Sure 'twas in a whirlwind myself was reared. Your honour forgets that not a morsel of glass was in the window at the head of my bed at home, and no blame to it

for that same, since sorrow pane in it, but we knocked out wid our balls ; and so my ould father,—and good luck to him!—said, ‘that the deuce a use it would be to have it minded, till your honour and I came to the years of discretion ;’ and sorrow a pain had I, no more nor the window.”

“ I have held my candle at every crevice without its flaring, and the walls seem perfectly dry,” said Cameron ; “ so I really think, since Dermod shrinks not from a hard plank for his couch — a couch that can be improved from our camp stores to-morrow, there can be no danger to be apprehended for his health by his sleeping here ; and thus aided by him, we need have little fear of not being able to repel the invaders we are taught to expect, and to penetrate the secrets of those visitations which have given birth to such wonderful reports.”

“ And upon my safe conscience to more reports yet,” responded Dermod, “ if they will call out our pistols to bother them. And now, having plenty of ammunition, we can

weather a siege, even though the divils of the valley were our assailants. Ay, faith ! your two honours, Carlo and myself, like church and state, king and constitution, may defy every assault, as long as we stand by each other."

On the succeeding morning, when our five speculators were assembled around their breakfast board, Marchmont said : —

" You informed us, Sir Frederick, that we had no neighbourhood here. Then pray, to whom belongs that beautiful *chaumière ornée* in the valley, of which I first obtained a glimpse from my chamber window, afterwards mounting one of the towers to gratify my curiosity by a full view of the attractive object ?"

" My information was very correct, Marchmont. We have no immediate neighbours, for even our parsonage is deserted by our vicar, residing at his curacy, six miles off. The cottage you have seen contains no neighbour for us. It belongs to Mrs. Morton

Manners, who has never returned to society, since her gallant husband, Adm'ral Manners, fell in the glorious victory of Trafalgar."

"The widow thus gives evidence of her being an old weatherbeaten scarecrow," exclaimed Nettlethorp — "one who stood no chance of a second mate, and therefore judiciously hoisted the plausible flag of distress. But, hark ye! Marchmont, let Dame Fancy trim up a mask for this devoted mourner, and distil a novel from this weeping-willow of the cottage."

"You are mistaken, Nettlethorp, relative to Mrs. Morton Manners," said Sir Frederick; "she is yet a very lovely woman, and was a celebrated beauty. At the age of twelve, I was deeply enamoured by her charms. My father, too, felt the magic of her fascinations, and offered her himself, ere his last marriage; and unfortunately for his children, was rejected by her, who, since the hour of her domestic calamity, has devoted herself to her lovely daughter."

"Of whom, for her mamma's sake, you

became enamoured," exclaimed Marchmont.
" Ay, most worthy baronet, this accounts for the deep blush that mounted to your cheek; when I mentioned the cottage of the valley."

" Not so," returned Sir Frederick — " Miss Manners had, ere I first beheld her, bestowed her heart and hand upon a gallant soldier; and in melancholy coincidence of fate, as her mother's happiness found its blight in the most glorious naval victory on record; so hers found its termination in the army's most splendid achievement. Her husband died at Brussels of the wounds he received at Waterloo. We all lamented the death of Major Brudenel."

" I have seen her then!" said Marchmont, " The day after poor Brudenel's interment, I saw his widow borne like a corse to her carriage, and placed in the arms of her mother. A babe under the escort of a nurse, I remember too, added interest to a scene that made resistless demands upon the sympathy of every beholder, of which there was no small assem-

blage in the *parc*; drawn thither to see the widow throw off."

"By this very show of grief," said Nettlethorp, "I prognosticate that this disconsolate will take unto herself another mate."

"But there was no show of grief upon her part," returned Marchmont. "The show was of our own seeking. To avoid observation, the fair disconsolate set out from Brussels at sun-rising, and the *amateurs* in beauty arose with the sun, to obtain a glimpse of this lovely creature, and to see the last of all that belonged to poor Brudenel."

"I do not imagine your prediction, Nettlethorp, likely to be verified by this fair widow," said Sir Frederick, "for she appears to have entered the sombre path of steady grief her mother has undeviatingly trodden."

"Ay, that sombre route will continue until her son's tutor carries her heart by storm," said Nettlethorp.

"Thou skeptic in woman's worth! she has no son to be tutored," exclaimed Sir Frederick, "since her only child is a daughter. In the

very teeth of your prognostics, I firmly assert my belief of her having consecrated her heart to the memory of her husband. She springs from a race unaffectedly constant to connubial attachment. Upon one example you can yourself decide. Mrs. Brudenel's maternal uncle, General De la Warr, lost his wife seventeen years ago, and has never forgotten her."

" Ay, but his was the constancy of man ; besides, his child perished in the same gale," returned Nettlethorp.

" I have been much disappointed on finding General De la Warr is gone once more to the Continent," said Sir Frederick ; " for when in England he passes much of his time with his sister, at Rosindale Cottage ; and judging from his conduct, whilst we were under his command, I have no doubt that we should have found in him a desirable neighbour ; notwithstanding he might have failed in obtaining for us the privilege of domesticating in the *coterie* of Mrs. Morton Manners."

" I also saw, from my reconnoitring post, a

magnificent mansion, situated in a park, about three miles distant from hence," said Marchmont. " Does that contain no society for us, poor knights of disconsolation?"

" To thy utter desperation, poor wight! — that mansion stands in a forlorn plight, un-owned — untenanted," returned Sir Frederick. " About four years since, the last occupant of Rosindale Park died without issue, and no heir has yet been traced as an inheritor of this magnificent mansion, and the pleasant appendage of an immense landed and funded property."

" Now, pray, why should not Dame Fortuna contrive the freak of tracing out this truant heir, in one of us worthies?" exclaimed Marchmont. " Positively she could not deposit the title-deeds in nobler hands. Then the fortunate youth might take the lovely widow by storm; and then, what delectable neighbours would spring out of a haunted castle and an heirless mansion!"

CHAPTER II.

FOR the purpose of introducing the inhabitants of Rosindale Cottage to our readers, we now beg leave to transcribe a few letters of a correspondence, carried on between Lady Caroline Townly and Miss Olivia De la Warr, niece to the gallant General of that name. The first of these epistles was written from Rosindale Cottage, a few months prior to the establishment of our subalterns in their forlorn station at Menroy Castle.

TO LADY CAROLINE TOWNLY, PARIS.

“ *Rosindale Cottage, August 20, 1818.* ”

“ To my utter amazement, my beloved Caroline, I have survived my transportation to this new world of rural seclusion, to pass, alas ! the sad remainder of my spinster days.

Cupid, or even Plutus, grant those days of dole may not spin out into midsummer drear of long unblessedness! Not, my dear friend, that I should purpose by any means to depend upon mankind for my restoration to happiness, could I descry hope of my emancipation from a country life in any other form. For know that those barbarous deceivers, men, were never so completely out of my favour as at this precise moment, when I am compelled by my cruel destiny to turn my despairing eyes towards them, as my forlorn hope of reserve.

“ And have I not just cause for my present misanthropy? From the moment it was decreed by my iron fate, that I was to be excommunicated from the gay world, nothing sounded in my ears but the protestations of the base deceivers, that there could be no possible existence for them, when deprived of the bright sun of my all-cheering presence; and so, Caroline, well aware of self-preservation being the first law of nature, and firmly believing mankind peculiarly addicted to the practice of this code of jurisprudence, how

could I choose but augur deliverance? Yet, lo! and behold! here have I, in all the brilliancy of my solar rays, been permitted by the babblers to sneak down into exile, without even the semblance of rescue ever being attempted.

“ According to the journal you requested me to keep for the gratification of your anxious friendship, it was upon the twelfth of this month I arrived at the climax of my misery; by entering, unrescued, that ruthless old town of M., the place appointed for my being delivered into the custody of my future jailor — *ma tante* Manners.

“ I found my jailor younger in aspect, and infinitely more prepossessing, than my imagination had represented her; and above all, the express image of my father, or, at least, of my father’s picture; for as no aid, alas! from fond memory has been permitted for my retracing what my parents were, I have hung over the semblance of each, which was left for my sorrowing idolatry, until every feature and expression have been engraven on the heart of

their orphan child ; and through this means, being initiated in family resemblances, and finding thus the fascinating countenance of my father beaming upon me through my aunt ; were she not my jailor, I should delight to look upon her, and consecrate her, as an object of reverence and duty, in my tenderest affection.

" As to my fair coz, I can scarcely describe the sensations her first appearance awakened in my bosom. A sort of strange commotion of panic, amazement, admiration, and, I suppose, envy. A pier glass, which ill-naturedly had perched itself in a situation to reflect my crest-fallen image for my own mortification, as I beheld her in the moment of our introduction, told me unequivocally I was surpassed. I also saw she towered above me in the world ; but not, like her Majesty Queen Bess, pronouncing my rival too tall, I have considered myself too short for the perfection of beauty, ever since I beheld her, whom I view with admiring terror, as my eclipsing planet.

" Mrs. Manners ordered refreshments for us at M. whilst our horses and attendants were in the act of renovating, after the toil of bringing the prisoner and her jailor together; and, whilst the servants of the inn were in waiting, perceiving them stealing glances at my coz and at me alternately, it was with some difficulty I could restrain myself from demanding — ' to whom they adjudged the apple?' But, for once in my life, I felt the influence of discretion, my dear Caroline, and bridled in a very unruly encumbrance.

" Oh, that I had always been so discreet, my friend; that I had ever considered it more judicious to be wise than witty! Then I had not attempted to convince my fastidious uncle, that no foreign *bel esprit* could surpass his animated niece Olivia; for, alas! my *persiflage* pronounced the fiat for my own misery; the provokingly incomprehensive veteran woefully mistaking *la vivacité de mon esprit* for absolute pertness; and then, oh then! with penetrating scrutiny, turned his mind's eye upon his copartners in guardianship of me,

even upon those dear delightful personages who reared you and me into what the world had unanimously pronounced — perfection. And so, for my disconsolation, this mental investigation terminated in some *hocus pocus* management between the General and the Lord on the woolsack, who have outgeneralled the Melmouths in their claim to protect my precious person.

“ How fervently I do wish our family in the last generation had not taken to the annoyance of presenting spinsters only as heirlooms; for had a cherub boy but smiled amongst us, I should have escaped the nuisance annexed to consequence; and not, as now, poor martyr to riches, as sole heiress to my own father, and coheiress presumptive to my uncle, have been carefully sent off to the dreary coast, to be bleached and purified from all my blots and blemishes.

“ Our immortal bard informs us, that ‘ the English will give any sum for viewing a dead Indian, or any wild monster.’ Now, dear, dear compassionate Caroline, cannot you

manage for your hapless friend, to have it given out amongst *amateurs* in wild animals—‘ that a sort of nondescript, whom no man can tame, may be seen by application to the keeper, at a certain cottage in the village of Rosindale, on the coast of ———;’ for unless you can kindly contrive something for my benefit, through a stimulus to curiosity, I know not how I am to vegetate in these regions, uncheered by the sun or moon of my idolatry, admiration and amusement. This cottage of dole is very picturesque; we live in a pleasing style of unaffected elegance. The native inhabitants are fascinating in manners and conversation, and the blessing of the neighbouring poor circle around them; yet the exotic brought hither from its natural soil finds nothing genial to it here. Oh for a mansion in the Seven Dials! For even that eccentricity I could hail as a constellation of attraction, to

Your disconsolate,

But affectionate friend,

OLIVIA DE LA WARR.”

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"Rosindale Cottage, December 2d, 1818.

"Your long silence led me to apprehend my dolorous epistles were not welcome to my dearest, earliest friend, now domestic happiness occupied her precious time; and this belief led me to the painfully inflicted restriction of my pen; but your kind letter has so satisfactorily accounted for your silence, that I hasten once more to address you, my dear Caroline; and thus to send proof of my heart feeling no pang of envy at those tantalizing scenes of pleasure you, with such charming animation, delineated for the poor recluse of Rosindale Cottage; where I now begin to suspect, that if the sweets of pleasure do not abound, neither are its thorns to be discovered.

"You desire, in your lively letter of commiseration, to be introduced without delay to our neighbourhood. Alas! I have no neighbourhood to introduce to you, Caroline. Our

sombre village of Rosindale sports not even the smart curate, whom you so attractively portray as being about to be captivated by my beauty ; not to say aught of my more sterling charms : so thus, by this unexpected impediment, I at once blight your charming Gretna Green expedition, for my emancipation from my doleful prison. And further, my dear friend, this aforesaid village is snugly deposited in a deep glen ; from whence, without the annihilating fatigue of mounting — what I, in my ignorance of rural scenery, to the amusement of *ma tante*, denominate precipices — you cannot see one inch beyond your nose, to look for neighbours ; or even for the passing conviction, that the surrounding world is inhabited : and even when the enormous toil of ascent is accomplished, you find your highly-raised expectation of discovering fellow beings, knocked on the head by an uninhabited mansion without an owner, on the east ; and by the ruins of a haunted castle, where no owner can be found with sufficient courage to reside, on the west.

“However, I yesterday soared high in the altitude of hope’s regions, in expectation of improvement in our population, when, after a slight fall of snow, my *femme de chambre*, Flower, brought intelligence to me ‘of the footsteps of two persons having been descried near the exterior of our paddock, and of their being of a superior order of pedestrians; for that she had been out to gaze upon the promising phenomena, and could therefore assure me, the impression had been made by boots of the true Hoby manufacture!’

“But, lo! what a teasing phantom hope proves in the country! the cheering footfalls have been traced to the haunts of evil spirits; and the village chronicle announces, this morning, ‘that a party of cunning men have arrived at Menroy Castle, for the exorcism of the unquiet spirits there assembled.’ What nonsense and stuff! But, although not, certainly, knowing what description of men exorcists may be, yet considering them *gens de petite étoffe*, through this unpardonable imposition upon the credulity of superstition, I promptly

silenced the ohs and ahs of Mrs. Flower's wonder, 'of how they could have become possessed of Hoby's boots!' by reminding her of the source open to them through her brethren of the reversionary robes.

" Talking of dress reminds me of your question relative to Mrs. Brudenel. ' She has thrown aside the first external emblem of woe, her weeds ;' but not, I am satisfied, in that sort of preparation you anticipate. You know not how she has been reared in the cypress-grove of wailing. I am confident she would consider herself a monster of inconstancy, did her heart ever cease to cherish the most tender remembrance of Brudenel. After every absence from our little circle, which is not devoted to the nursery, each line of her heavenly countenance proclaims weeping has been her employment ; yet she never introduces her lamentations into our family circle ; on the contrary, the moment she perceives her anxious mother's mournful observation of the traces of her recent tears, she starts some cheerful subject, or plays some animating

measure upon the piano-forte or harp, both of which instruments she touches with the hand of magic ; and certainly through magic she acquired her science ; for in this very cottage she received her instructions through the power of an enchantress ; even from her mother, who, in this captivating species of acquirement, yields in knowledge to few professors.

“ You will very much wonder, as I have done before you, Caroline, how love found its intricate way into this seclusion of ours ! But, its having done so gives me infinite comfort, and inspires me with the inclination to inform you how this difficult matter was achieved.

“ When Alethea Manners was about sixteen, Brudenel, then a subaltern in a cavalry regiment, was sent to this part of the coast to look after smugglers ; and one day, whilst riding through the wood which surrounds our domain, a shot was fired from ambush at him ; but, having providentially missed its fatal aim, he immediately galloped towards the thicket from whence the sound had issued ;

when, as he was in the act of preparing for a leap over some intervening barriers, he was knocked off his horse by some miscreants who were there perdue.

" In the fall poor Brudenel's arm was broken, and his head wounded ; but the assassins were driven from the termination of their atrocious project by the rushing out of *ma tante's* people from her grounds, drawn forth by the sound of the pistol.

" With the permission of Mrs. Manners, the poor rescued, but wounded young soldier, was borne into Rosindale Cottage to receive a more desperate wound. This wounding match went merrily round, and Miss Manners also found the power of Cupid's prowess ; and as the parents of poor Brudenel, who, whilst in attendance upon their son at Rosindale Cottage, became as much enamoured of the beauties of Alethea's mind, as the young soldier was of her *tout ensemble* ; and her kind mother having the courtesy to be as much charmed with the son of Lord and Lady John Brudenel as they were with her daughter, the alliance

was sanctioned by all sorts of propitious plaudits.

"The afflicting termination to this auspiciously commenced union you already know; but I cannot conceive that the measure has been a judicious one, in my aunt continuing this early mourner in this spot, as the brooding nest of unavailing sorrow. A change of scene might have led to the restoration of this amiable young woman's happiness, through some irresistible candidate for a new attachment.

"By what marvellous chapter of accident, I wonder, is love to get into the wood for my accommodation? Not by smashing bones, or breaking heads, I trust; for there would be no pleasing variety in the incident; and I do not imagine that I should make a captivating nurse. A wry face is a monstrous ugly thing, and would stand no sort of chance of entoiling my heart; and a groan would send me scampering off to seek more cheering sounds.

"Were I addicted to love, I should certainly feel a little dispirited in my forlorn

hope-station in Rosindale cemetery; but, as merely to awaken admiration is all I pant for, I am still more restless in my living sepulchre; because in the first case I should rest secure of something turning up, either to win my heart or my fortune; for I know monsieur Cupid is prone to out of the way exploits, and that Plutus is never out of his way. But, talking of Cupid's marvellous proneness to eccentric freaks, brings to my remembrance the only time in my life that the capricious urchin was near overtaking me; and which, strange to say, was in the inattractive path of downright impertinence.

"Whilst you were performing the sweet transit of your honey-moon last Christmas, you may remember hearing the earthly intelligence from me of our having a very numerous party at Sir Walter Melmoth's, at Hampton Court; men in such shoals, they were scarcely worth numbering. The preconcerted plans of Lady Melmoth, for varied amusements, failed; so all the poor loungers had to do, for the prevention of their unopportune falling

asleep, was, to blazon forth, for pastime, their admiration of Sir Walter's ward : and so, one particular evening, there was such pacing over the same ground in the flowery path of adulation, that even I, vain I, felt weary of the subject ; at least from those who thus offered incense to my charms.

" But, Caroline, there was one man amid the throng, who had thought proper never to utter even one word to me, but in the most economic mode of speech, which common civility could manage. From the natural spirit of contradiction, therefore, this identical man was the only one of the whole group whom I wished should say civil things to me ; so, this aforesaid evening, I had perceived Sir Apathy very attentive to the audible disclosures of each adulator's ideas relative to my enchantments ; and so, Caroline, I suddenly addressed him, with an air of playfulness, saying : —

" Come, sir, it is your turn now ; and as you have been observing me with serious attention quite long enough to have formed

your decided judgment, pray make public exactly what you think of me?"

"Indeed, Miss De la Warr," he unexpectedly replied, "I do not think of you at all;" and saying this, with a graceful bow of provoking carelessness, he was retiring into the adjoining room.

"Come back, Sir Apathy," I exclaimed, affecting to join in the laugh now grinning out at my expense. "And do you hear, having been informed by such numerous authorities, that to evince good taste, you must think of me?" begin now, and let me know the result to-morrow at noon, precisely. "Farewell! remember twelve!"

The laugh became loud: the man, with easy *nonchalance*, bowed his intended acquiescence in my commands; and scarcely one moment of forgetfulness bowed my eyelids down that night, so occupied was I in thinking of how much more fascinating this man's sauciness made him appear, than the fawning servility of his compeers; and in wondering if those fascinations the novelty of his comport-

ment had conjured up, would evaporate, when he commenced my panegyrist on the morrow.

"But, on the morrow! what a lecture had he the audacity to pour into my astonished ears, as the fine result of the contemplation I had required! In short, I might have been a good sort of body; an animal, who might have absolutely endangered the repose of his icework-heart, had not my incorrigible vanity and devotion to dissipated follies marred me so deplorably. Pshaw! I cannot endure to recollect all the blots and blemishes he had the shocking effrontery to enumerate, as the notable discoveries he had made to lower the topsails of my vanity.

"However, not choosing to appear crest-fallen, as an humbled convert to his sanctified wisdom, I desired him 'to think of me again, as second thoughts were proverbially best.' This I contrived to utter in a playful tone, although ready to cry in childish vexation, and then suddenly resolved to try if it were possible that I could really become more fascinating upon any other plan than that

Lady Melmoth and I had mutually adopted ; she, from her conviction of being right ; and I, from her having reared me to take her as my model of human perfection.

" From this moment I new modelled my airs and graces. The opinions of Sir Apathy became my monitors ; I walked naturally, I talked naturally, I laughed naturally ; and, instead of inviting the open declarations of flattery, I listened to the conversation even of those whom I admitted had wiser heads than my own whirligig ; and actually, more than once, I felt amazement at how very near rational I was becoming.

" Very shortly after this freak of plausibility in my conduct had commenced, our Christmas party dispersed. I returned to town with the Melmots, and encountered Monsieur Apathy at a ball. I danced a quadrille with sober grace, for I observed Sir Apathy intently observing me ; and my speculating exhibition terminated, to my infinite joy and amazement, his censorship solicited the honour of my hand for the next quadrille.

"Need I say, Caroline, that whilst fulfilling this engagement, I exerted every fascination, that he might fairly own the advantage I had gained by his second effort at thinking of me; and very soon I discovered, by the flattering expression of his eyes, and the softening tones of his harmonious voice, that I was succeeding beyond my utmost expectation. But, alas! such is the instability of woman-kind! my weak brain either became inebriated by my unexpected triumph, or my flattering exploit being achieved, it no longer interested me. I gave way to the whim of constitutional caprice; for the tottering machine, bearing the ancient honours of the house of Headland, now evinced such serious intimations of admiration for my charms, that I made a prompt transfer of my smiles from my handsome Mentor to the noble earl; for there was no notwithstanding the novelty of admiration glaring through a pair of spectacles.

"For at least an hour, I marked Sir Apathy warily observing me in my conspicuous flirtation with the hoary peer; and I became doubly

diligent in my clever prank, in delighted anticipation of receiving a long lecture from my interesting Mentor, the first favourable opportunity. But, suddenly he vanished, and vain proved the researches of my eager glances to descry the truant; but at length two odious animals, like two birds of omen, perched at my back, to murmur out their discordant notes.

“ ‘ Whither has ——— vanished?’ exclaimed one of them; ‘ I want to speak to him upon important business.’

“ ‘ Then you must seek him at Cambray; for he is gone to expedite preparations for his immediate return thither.’

“ I heard no more of their croaking, for the room seemed all at once to commence a rapid waltz with me; and had not an awkward *figurante* most humanely kicked me with conspicuous energy in his high capers, on whom I conveniently laid the trickling shower which fell from my foolish eyes, I should have been betrayed to the two ill-omened ravens.

“ So thus ended my adventures at the brink

of love's smooth, but treacherous lake; and therefore, Caroline, as men are such testy animals, I mean — I cannot conceive what is the matter with my nerves. I really cannot write a steady line: and a sudden headach too! Absolutely this imprisonment will prove the executioner of my death-warrant. I cannot write more at present."

CHAPTER III.

MISS DE LA WARR IN CONTINUATION.

December 3.

" I BROKE off my epistle yesterday to try if air and exercise would remove my sudden indisposition, as such is the prescription of *ma tante* for every ailment; and this pedestrianism led me to an incident for my letter to you; and incidents at Rosindale are rare commodities.

" Had I been aware of my young coz being in the grounds with her nurse, I would have avoided an encounter with her, as we are become fast friends, and have admitted General De la Warr's beautiful dog Pedron into our firm alliance. The child and dog no sooner espied me in their walk, than each flew to me to commence our usual pastime of high romps;

and although my nerves were not at that precise moment in perfect unison with their wishes, yet they lured me on by degrees to the full climax of juvenile delight; and for some time my dear ally, Sophia, revelled in her wild transport on viewing my bo-peep exploit with Pedron from behind a mask, to which was affixed an enormous pair of spectacles, and displayed from beneath the hood of my garden cloak, rendered my appearance perfectly bewitching.

" At length my attention was arrested by the sound of a flageolet proceeding from the public road near our gate, breathing tones of taste and sweetness almost celestial.

" Losing at once every recollection of mask, headache, nervous tremor, and all impediments, I scampered to the gate, and mounting a garden roller, which was accommodatingly placed there, popped my Shipton bust over the wall, when I beheld, through my spectacles, a young rustic standing by the gate playing thus divinely.

" Down sprang I from my elevation, and dashed into the house, to obtain the necessary

passport for the admission of this modern Orpheus ; but ere I could discover the retreat of *ma tante*, the minstrel was established in the servants' hall, for the family *en masse* to hear his exquisite performance ; and to which assembly I was promptly led by the magic of sweet sounds.

“Conceive, my dear Caroline, how the country air has enervated my vanity ! You will scarcely credit the fact, but I absolutely thought more of the charms of the flageolet's notes than of my own personal ones ; for I never paused for the purpose of making even rustics gape with wonder at my transcendent beauty, by extricating myself from my mask and hood ; the wire by which the former was fastened to the latter, having got entangled in my hair, had made the extrication no longer the work of high presto ! and thus disguised I took my stand in the hall of melody ; *ma tante*, it seems, highly applauding my discretion ! My discretion ! I do wonder what she will applaud next ! — for concealing my face from a suspicious sort of vagrant.

“ But, alas ! my friend, approbation is not often fond of a sojourn in my society ; and too soon my volatility obscured the gleam which beamed upon me in the mind of *ma tante*. Yet, how could I resist the lively air of France our minstrel glided into from a solemn dirge ? How could I withstand the importunities of the animated Sophia, to join in her grand exhibition of extempore figure dancing ? And, above all, how was I to resist the juvenile spirit within me ? How I might have achieved this I know not, for I made not an effort to resist ; but off I dashed in a new species of *ballet* manufacture with my dear young ally ; when Pedron, feeling himself our lawful companion in sport, performed most ludicrously his part in our grand *ballet*.

“ Whether Mrs. Manners marked the minstrel as too suspiciously observant, or that she disapproved of the exhibition, she ordered poor Pedron to be borne off the field of action, and drew Sophia into her arms ; when instantly the minstrel, receiving his instructions from these manœuvres, that gaiety was to be suspended,

melted his pliant strain into one of such exquisite pathos, that Alethea, completely fascinated by its plaintive magic, unfortunately inquired the name—the reply was, ‘Forget me not;’ and the not-forgetting widow fell senseless into my arms.

“In the consternation that succeeded, the minstrel effected his mysterious vanishing, and without fee or reward, a circumstance which has considerably strengthened the unfavourable suspicions of *ma tante’s* mind relative to him; suspicions which were first awakened by his representing himself as ‘a disbanded musician from a regimental band;’ a statement which her skill in the science convinced her was untrue; for she soon discovered, that however exquisite his taste and execution, he possessed no proficiency in that point which could alone enable him to perform in concert; and so all suspicious circumstances combined have led Mrs. Manners to fear him as the reconnoitring emissary of some desperate banditti. A most rigid investigation of the property upon the premises has proved that ‘nothing vanished with the

man.' Madame and the sagacious Mr. Watts have determined upon its not having been present, but future booty the artful miscreant sought; so all the locks have, in consequence, been warily examined; bolts and bars of defiance added, swords sharpened, pistols cleaned, and blunderbusses cocked, in formidable readiness, with all sorts and kinds of men-traps, (not meaning Alethea and myself,) and spring guns placed in train for the pending defence.

"Should we escape robbery and murder from the hands of this alarming Arion and his dolphins, I will duly inform you of the miracle: in the intermediate time of trembling and awful expectation, I remain

My dear Caroline's

Affectionate friend,

OLIVIA DE LA WARR

"Flower has just announced, with her usual 'dear ma'am, this frightful man is prodigiously handsome, and has such uncommonly white hands, that Mr. Watts, who, forsooth, pretends to know just every thing, as if he had

lived in the world like us, ma'am, says, 'they were not honestly come by.'

" ' What,' I replied, ' does Watts, then, think he robs poultry yards to procure chicken-skins for gloves?'

" ' La, ma'am ! sure you do not take him for a thief? If he is one, it is in hearts, not diamonds; his tricks lie. I have lived in the great world too long not to understand the sheep's eyes he was casting at Mrs. Brudenel from under that monstrous janty cap ; that was put on, not with the slap-down-slouch of a miserable rustic, but with the lady-killing art of grace and fashion ; and those tell-tale eyes, ma'am, had their wanderings after you as you danced. Upon my honour ! had he been a picklock, it was upon the premises he would have been riveting his glances, and not have been ready to laugh outright when you dashed off in such funny style your masquerade habit. Ay, ay, upon my honour ! there was more in the young man's head than playing his music, though not of the vulgar nature that know-all-country frumps Watts imagines. No, no, my father

never worked for Mr. Hoby for so many years without my having come to the knowledge of the genuine make; and I'll be bound the bootmarks did not come about these premises through the vulgar means of old-clothes-men. Ah! ma'am, what a pity it is the parish church should be now under repair, and an impassable road to the next parish in winter; so no going to church for you next Sunday, or my head against Mr. Watts's wisdom, but as sure as I have lived in the great world, you would espy that suspected musician perched in his own place, amongst the gentry in the congregation, gaping at you and Mrs. Brudenel, with eyes sparkling like your own, ma'am, with merry fancies.'

"So much for the eloquence of my *femme de chambre*."

The second of the foregoing letters from Miss De la Warr to her friend was despatched from Rosindale Cottage in a very few days after the business, which drew Sir Frederick Boling-

broke from his friends, had caused his departure from Menroy Castle.

Aware of the long-indulged predilection of Mrs. Morton Manners for retirement, Sir Frederick had forborne to take advantage of former intimacy by calling upon her; reserving that privilege until his return, should he then learn that the renewal of acquaintance would not be displeasing to her.

Sir Frederick not having made known to his friends these intentions relative to Mrs. Manners, Marchmont felt no impeding scruple of delicacy to the gratification of again beholding the interesting Mrs. Brudenel; for as yet no intimation had reached the inhabitants of the castle of the residence of any other attraction in Rosindale Cottage worthy of an effort to behold.

With some difficulty Marchmont prevailed upon Fauconberg to accompany him in a reconnoitring project round the premises of Rosindale Cottage, in the hope of obtaining a view of the disconsolate beauty it contained. Fauconberg, from a painful remembrance of

the misery he had endured, ere his attachment to Alvina had been lulled to rest, felt no inclination for a second attack of the pangs of hopeless love, as hopeless he considered any serious attachment must prove to him, through the desolation of his pecuniary prospects: but Marchmont, who had never seriously loved, experienced no alarm about the danger to be encountered; all he thought of was, to wile away heavy hours, and to regale his admiring eyes, even by a transient glance at beauty.

The footsteps of our pedestrian friends were those, therefore, which had been traced in the snow, and, in some measure, justified the science of Mrs. Flower in boot-making; but all they obtained by their peregrination around the site of the attractive cottage was, to hear the sound of a harp breathing forth the most enchanting strains.

This disappointment formed part of the conversation after dinner that day at the Castle, and ended in a wager between Marchmont and Nettlethorp; the latter betting upon his

conviction, “ that no stratagem of Marchmont’s would be sufficiently ingenious to elicit the lovely recluse to his view ; ” and the former, through a determination to leave nothing unattempted to defeat the confident assertions of Nettlethorp.

Marchmont, eager for the achievement of winning a bet from the oracle of their party, hired the loan of the herdsman’s Sunday clothes, and, by some manœuvring with a French cap, contrived to conceal his curling hair, and almost to cover his cheeks and chin with fur ; and thus accoutred, with his flageolet in hand, proceeded to the cottage gate, relying upon the power of music for drawing the lovely recluse to the windows to listen to his plaintive strains.

But the distressing conclusion of his successful speculation threw something of a sombre cloud over the ecstasy he felt, on having proved a better general than Nettlethorp had augured. However, the moment the attendants withdrew after dinner, he burst out into an explosion of joyful exultation at the success

of his undertaking, when Nettlethorp demanded "a full, sober, and connected account of his proceedings, ere he should give credit to his having lost his wager."

"When," continued Nettlethorp, "you make it appear, as your incoherent raptures would insinuate, that you indubitably obtained an *entrée* through the mandate of the whining widow, then shall I pronounce her, what I always suspected, neither more nor less than an Ephesian matron."

"Hold your defaming tongue, you incorrigible traducer!" exclaimed Marchmont. "What do you know of Ephesian matrons, or British either? Maids, wives, and widows always fly scared from the track that you appear in. Does your classical reminiscence present you with no Penelope? Nothing in the form of connubial constancy? But since you are still so alive to your juvenile lore, pray think upon a certain fable, and call yourself the fox personified, and womankind the fruit in question: women are, with you, the

grapes to be pronounced unpalatable, because they will not let you reach them."

"But how came you to know your wondrous admission was through the order of Mrs. Brudenel?" demanded Fauconberg, wishing to terminate the volatile raillery of Marchmont, perceiving Nettlethorp evincing symptoms of impatience. "I now almost feel repentant at not acceding to your romantic proposition of seeking the adventure with you, as the careful leader of a blind minstrel."

"I'll tell you all about it, if the sapient will be so kind as to suspend his hostilities against the fair daughters of creation. Indeed, Fauconberg, you may make up your mind to hear of nothing else from me, until I begin the composition of my novel."

"You, my repentant fellow, saw the famous disguise I had on. Not even Nettly, had he not been in the secret, could have suspected my being a gentleman, although the military *borrácha* did ooze out a little. Well, sir, when arrived before the cottage gate, I spouted

forth one my of imposing wild flourishes on the flageolet, then melted into a soft air, which I breathed out most pathetically, though boldly, until a head popped up over the gate, which I no sooner beheld than my notes changed to terror and amaze.

"I know, in days of yore, when the horn sounded, that grim dwarfs appeared on the drawbridge of the castle, said I to myself; but how, in modern times, comes the witch of Endor here, conjured up upon the portal of a cottage? But, in the name of all that is magical, can such a grim sorceress find charms in music? or is she on the wing to scare me off the premises? However, sir, as well as the falterings of dismay would permit articulation, I respectfully addressed the old beldam, who, with her nose and chin pendant over the wall, as the portcullis of the citadel, she guarded, glared down upon me through her spectacles; but making no reply to my address, she vanished without a whirlwind.

"In one moment more the gate opened, and, lo! there appeared to me a wizard of the

same forbidding mould, who vociferated gruffly,
‘ Sheer off! we want none of your yelling flourishes here. Come, bear away, you lazy loitering lugger!’

“ ‘ Wat! Wat! ’ shrieked out a shrill and tremulous voice from the house, ‘ admit that piper.’

“ ‘ Not I, by the compass! ’ cried Wat. ‘ Admit that piper, indeed! The woman is mad! ’

“ ‘ I tell you,’ shrieked out the woman within, ‘ that Mrs. Brudenel wishes to hear the man play; and you cannot expect her to stand shivering at an open window in such a day as this; so that you are to take him into the servants’ hall on *akwount* of the fire, and that we all on us may hear him.’

“ ‘ Well, then, if he must come in, he must,’ cried Wat, rather sullenly. ‘ But, my piping chap, ere you run into port to pipe all hands, clear the snow off your rigging. And mind, do not play any vulgar tunes for the ladies you are now to appear before, unseemly trash as their ears have not been accustomed to hear;

and when they enter the hall, mind your bearings, and make your respectful obeisance. Avast! cannot you steer clear of an enemy when you see him alongside of you? Sheer off from that dog's kennel, can't you? But, hold! you need not fear the captain of this guardship. Old Neptune will not treat you with a broadside, as you hang out no pendant rags of distress in your rigging. And I say, my chap, if you steer yourself steadily through this performance before your betters, you shall have, besides your pay, something to keep your spirits afloat this frosty morning. And harkee, my youngster, do not, as you value a rope's end, play "Rule Britannia"—"The Death of Nelson"—"Britons strike Home"—nor "See the Conquering Hero comes."

"These diversified instructions continued until we reached the hall of audience, where, to my utter dismay, this amphibious master of the ceremonies commanded my cap off; but from this very cap forming the principal part of my disguise, I was compelled to a piteous fabrication, for retaining it in its station, 'of

how I had been wounded in the battle of Waterloo, and how I had never been able to have all the bandages removed.'

"We must change this damage in your topmast to a skirmish with the rheumatism, my brave lad," responded Wat, "since no Waterloo wounds must appear on this coast."

"Now came pouring into the hall a strong phalanx of Mollys, and Jennys, and Bettys, as neat and as prim as exactitude and the fashion of past ages could make them; then a squad of ruddy Robins, roundabout Johns, and grey-headed Thomases; then flourished in a modern *fille de chambre*; and then paced in a nurse-maid, leading, as if from walking, the most lovely cherub my eyes ever beheld."

"Having been ordered, whilst Mr. Wat conceived himself a bear-leader, 'to play only the gentlest of tunes,' I, in conformity with my instructions for steady bearings in my course, set off with a grand flourish of the nightingale, which turned out a presentimental flourish; for, like those which usher in crowned heads in dramas, it proved the accompaniment

of the grand *entrée* of the lady of the hall, as stately a dame as ever wore a diadem; but who was graced by another accompaniment, as plaintive and sweet as ever were the warblings of Philomel, her widowed daughter, of whom I must say, in despite of Nettly's jeers, 'that if any thing can be found to surpass this drooping lily in interesting loveliness, it must exist beyond the spheres.'

"And now, my commiserating companions, I found Mr. Wat a most merciless tormentor, for, without compunction, he inflicted upon my poor patient head rheumatic gout and incurable deafness, as my apologies for appearing covered in so august a presence.

"The glance I stole at Mrs. Brudenel nearly destroyed my harmonic powers; but promptly conquering my amazed admiration, I pursued my melody with my very best exertions; but whilst breathing forth one of my most melting cadences, in came flying the identical grim beldam who had performed portcullis on the wall. Her mode of entrance seemed inexplicable. I conceived it a flight

of necromantic science; for she seemed borne on zephyr's wings, so fleet, so steady was her advance. This witch of witches, as I tremulously marked her course, became stationary, and, to my increasing amazement, by the ladies of the mansion, who seemed not in the least scared by her proximity.

"At length, sir, the ungovernable caprices of my fancy led to my performance of a lively air, which infected the young cherub with the spirit of Terpsichore, when, upon the utterance of some cabalistick words by the urchin, out darted from beneath the ambush of the witch's deformity—a houri—a nymph—a form of witchery most formidable; one who looked as if to make men mad with her enchantments would be charming sport withal, and to laugh at their malady the climax of her sportiveness."

"Did this witch's eyes glare? and what colours did they glare with?" demanded Nettlethorp.

"As well might you expect to learn the colours of the gem sparkling from the diversity of lights, sir, or of the sun in his full splendour,"

responded Marchmont. " All that I can affirm, Nettly, is, that there was colour sufficient for the most dangerous admiration, had not my fancy been enthralled by the mild sapphirine radiance which beamed in the sweet luminaries, through which you could clearly read every movement of the heavenly widow's gentle soul.

" But whilst I now and then stole a glance from my entranced gaze at the lovely mourner, to turn upon the most perfect model of grace and symmetry which Terpsichore had ever animated to perfection, a rude Pomeranian dog joined in the merry round, with so much comic effect, that to save myself from the indecorum of committing audible risibility, that might have subjected me to Mr. Wat's rope's end, I glided off, rather ungallantly, to the bewitching votary of Terpsichore I must confess, from my gay strain into a plaintive measure; and propelled by vanity, my lay intuitively proved that of my own composition, which has been unluckily so much admired.

" But, alas! in the moment when my vanity

was in high revel at the plaudits bestowed upon my lay; and that I, unwarily forgetting the prohibition of Mr. Wat to certain tunes, in response to Mrs. Brudenel's query, announced its electric name; how, in one instant, were my ideal castles shivered into atoms in my wild fancy, by one stroke of certainty! The genuine swoon of the widow of the gallant Brudenel pronounced 'that' the injunction recorded by my lay was registered in her heart, where it could never be obliterated by any successor.'

"In the commotion that ensued, opportunity was afforded me of absconding; and though humanity upbraided me, and my anxiety was at painful warfare with my prudence, in thus retreating ere I could hear of the recovery of the lovely susceptible, necessity still impelled the measure, to escape the awkward annoyance which would have otherwise awaited me through the promised hospitality of Mr. Wat."

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. MORTON MANNERS, TO LIEUTENANT
GENERAL DE LA WARR, MADRID.

"Rosindale Cottage, January 20th, 1819.

"YOUR letter, my beloved brother, brought with it the balm of consolation to my anxious heart; for I had felt extreme uneasiness at your long silence. I had lost too many, on whom my affection rested, to feel at ease whilst uncertain of your fate.

"Why, my dear Augustus, fill so many lines of your welcome letter with thanks for my not inquiring into the cause of your hasty departure from England? Assuredly I deserve no thanks; for I felt conviction, that were it proper for me to know the cause, you would have voluntarily made the communication. You now say—‘you hope shortly to

call upon me for congratulations ; and that you feel secure of receiving them, from the very centre of my affectionate heart, although the source must necessarily diminish the pecuniary expectations from you of my children.'

" By this allusion, I conclude that you are upon the point of marriage. Upon this event, my congratulations will spring with my prayers, for every happiness to attend the kindest of brothers, and most beloved of friends : whilst upon the subject of the diminution, or total loss of pecuniary expectations for my daughter and her child, I have to say that they surely have sufficient for every possible comfort; that we have been well instructed how frail is earthly happiness ; and that riches cannot preserve it from overthrow. But, however, let my children sustain whatever loss they may by this event, they must be amply compensated through the gratification of seeing you, my beloved brother, restored to happiness.

" You say you tremble at asking, and shall tremble still more on receiving my reply — how Olivia is going on under my auspices ?

Had you made your query earlier, I own I should have been at some difficulty how to form my answer; but now, above four months' observation enables me to speak with confidence; and to tell you, that your hand was not stretched forth too late to snatch her from the precipice, where her father's unfortunate election of personal guardians had placed her.

"I, who knew so well the absence of every good propensity from the bosom of Lady Melmoth's parents, could scarcely hope a child of theirs could prove a conscientious guardian. But all this was unknown to poor Edward; who, fascinated by the attentions of Sir Walter and Lady Melmoth to his adored and dying wife, when he formed his acquaintance with them in Devonshire, forgot to ask his judgment 'if it were not possible his own sister, whose heart and principles were known to him from earliest childhood, might not prove a more judicious guardian for his orphan daughter, than the friends, formed in a short season at a watering resort?'

"My calamitous seclusion at Rosindale

permitted not my seeing this poor isolated child, after her early loss of both her parents; for though by letter I often importuned a visit from my niece at Rosindale, my wish was coldly negatived by Lady Melmoth; who, at length confessed her apprehension of the effect my Trophonian cave might have upon the susceptible Olivia: and, alas! I have lived sorely to deplore its contagious effect upon my own susceptible charge, who has here imbibed that constancy in grief, which, with terror I perceive, has expunged happiness from her heart for ever. Oh! my brother, how has experience taught me the folly, nay culpability, of mourning to excess those afflictions which are ordained by the All-Wise as touchstones of our obedience, or contumacy! Now too late I have discovered that resignation, not despondency, is the duty which the faith of a Christian points to; and had I learned it ere it was too late, I might have steered a midway course, between the sombre and the gaudy scenes in which my Alethea and poor Olivia have been reared.

"As you prepared me to expect, I found the matured aspect of my new charge most lovely and prepossessing ; and combining, in feature and expression, many resemblances that deeply touched my heart ; but not as you predicted did I perceive any presumptuous volubility, or assumption of superior intellect. Her spirits were perhaps subdued, by parting from those joys which her education had taught her to consider as all that was valuable in existence. Certain it is, however, that scarcely any tendency to those foibles which alarmed you, have appeared at Rosindale.

"For the first few days my *protégée* appeared in evident awe of me, and to regard my Alethea as she would a pathetic tale, over which her susceptibility longed to shed its tears of sympathy ; but a very few days seemed to reconcile her, in some measure, to her destiny. The pale hue of her beautifully rounded cheek resumed its rosy blush, and her own sadness evaporated ; when, to own the truth, her animated gaiety proved not a little

annoying to the long *tête-à-tête* mourners. But, to Alethea, this annoyance hourly decreased, through the magic of maternal gratitude. The beautiful town *bel-esprit* commenced a strong alliance with the wild and happy Sophia; and through this confederacy was the heart of the gentle mother won, and mine not a little softened. But when I beheld your Pedron taken cordially into the alliance, I formed a very favourable impression of a disposition, which, in the moment of being wrested from all its fond delights, could seek and find consolation in such innocent pastime, such tender propensities; and which could establish in her favour the prized animal of the very individual, who had suddenly snatched her from all the charms she believed could gild life's perspective.

“ As time passed on, my *protégée’s* awe of me perceptibly diminished; and now we have arrived at her revealing to me, by degrees, all deficiencies in the religious or moral points of her education, as they strike upon her own comprehensive mind; for upon these points,

vanity presents no veil to conceal them from her own detection ; and I now feel convinced, that her present fortunate seclusion will shortly purify her mind from the poison it has imbibed from the pernicious atmosphere she has been reared in ; notwithstanding we have yet to contend with that instability in application which habitual idleness, or rather time devoted to frivolity, has established too strongly for the newly-awakened impulse of youthful enthusiasm readily to overcome.

" In our confidential conversations, I found that benevolence had not been an inactive inhabitant of Olivia's bosom ; but more under the influence of capricious fancy, or indiscriminating generosity, than true effective charity ; and in aiming at the correction of these errors in her youthful judgment, I have already lured her into useful employment for some of those hours which she hitherto squandered away unprofitably, by inducing her to attempt some of the unrefined uses of the needle, in working for three poor deserted children, whom my people found by the road-

side, in a most deplorable state of wretchedness ; and as I arranged for Olivia's being present when the toilet was made from her gift and work, the artless joy of the poor innocents, on the transition to the comfort of warm clothing, so sensibly affected the young novice in such scenes, that I feel a strong presentiment charity will henceforth find in her an active and a faithful agent.

" I must now relate an incident to you, which filled me with much apprehension, through a strong suspicion of some lover of my *protégée* having followed her hither in disguise. [Mrs. Manners here recounts the suspicious visit of the itinerant minstrel, and his departure without recompense.] But my real apprehensions I veiled under the pretended one of alarm at meditated burglary ; and for some time nothing further transpired, relative to this naturally gifted minstrel.

" I had heard from Watts, that a party of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke's brother officers were staying at Menroy Castle for the amusement of shooting ; yet I never thought of

embodying the musician as one of them, secure in the propriety of Sir Frederick's well regulated mind, for preventing such a liberty. But, alas ! I have been terribly at fault in my calculations. Sir Frederick is not with his friends at the Castle ; and last Sunday, our church being re-opened for divine service, we of course attended ; and soon after our arrival, I beheld, from my commanding pew, three strangers enter with our melodious visitant. They were all ushered to the castle pew, which you may remember looks immediately upon mine ; and soon my intelligent glances at the presumptuous intruder conveyed to his consciousness my recognition ; for in one moment he was covered with the deepest blushes of confusion.

“ These sportsmen were all remarkably attentive to the duties of our assembling, which would have forcibly increased the favourable impression made by their being admitted as guests to the amiable baronet ; had it not been for the reprehensible boldness of the young

intruder, which compelled me at once to assume the most frigid reserve.

“ These sportsmen are all extremely prepossessing, particularly two of them, who are so transcendently handsome, with something so peculiarly attractive in their countenances, that I earnestly wish them at the Land’s End ; which indeed would be no bad wish realized for the most interesting of the two, who looks consumptive, and as if borne down with mental or bodily suffering. I do not wish love to be introduced into the head of my *protégée* until I have accomplished the introduction of prudence, and useful knowledge, that may form her at length into a promising candidate for matrimonial happiness.

“ Is it not strange, Augustus, that neither Olivia nor Alethea should have recognised our minstrel ? I wonder if Sir Frederick is himself coming to continue any time at Menroy Castle ? Oh my brother, how I do wish he would come ! For to let you into my heart’s secret, I have long cherished a wish,

that the amiable Bolingbroke and my precious child might be thrown continually into each other's society'; for were they, I have little doubt but he would draw the rankling thorn from her bosom, by awakening there a new attachment: and forgive a fond mother's partiality, Augustus, I think it would be utterly impossible for him, with his rational turn of mind, to see much of Alethea's sweet unobtrusive loveliness of mind, as well as form, without serious captivation; and notwithstanding fortune smiles not upon him, with rapture I would attend them to the altar.

"I have written you a volume; but you desired to know my every sentiment relative to Olivia. I have therefore given them fully, and as they are so expressive of my approbation, I am sure the volume will be read by you with pleasure, and more particularly as it is the production of

My beloved brother's
Affectionate, and devoted friend,
CONSTANTIA MANNERS."

CHAPTER V.

MISS DE LA WARR TO LADY CAROLINE
TOWNLY, PARIS.

"Rosindale Cottage, February 1st, 1819.

" You desire to know, Caroline, if the poor exotic sickens and withers in the new soil, so ungenial to it? I have the pleasure to reply, the poor exotic thrives most marvelously; its health, its strength, its bloom improving; and the curious in plants affirm, that it daily puts out some new shoot of promise. In fact, Caroline, could any one have prophesied the possibility of my breathing so comfortably in the country, at the end of six calendar months, I should have assured them ' prophecy was not their forte, and have advised their attempting some other path to notoriety.'

" You, my friend, who well know how my days were whirled on in the merry-go-round of dissipation, and how I only lived in the dazzling rays of the sun of admiration — you would gaze in wonder at the absolute contentment of my existence at Rosindale ; where not a visitor has appeared since I have been here. No routs nor revels to cheer me, nor even the wily tongue of bewitching adulation, trilling its delicious tones through my attentive ears ; and yet I live — live to tell you, I have endured all this ! And what is even still more miraculous, this dolorous sequestration has conjured up a whimsical determination in my mind, which nothing shall ever induce me to recede from ; and in apprehension of the influence of undue authority, I will have the resolution inserted in my marriage articles — namely, ' that I am to pass two months, or six weeks, of every revolving year, in total seclusion, like that at Rosindale Cottage.'

" And now comes my reason for the above whimsical determination. My sagacity has discovered it to be a specific, though some-

what unpalatable, for clearing the head in a most surprising manner, and introducing an acquaintance to our intimate knowledge — one we scarcely should find time to recognise in town — one of the family of the mighty house of Self ! And Myself, to whom I have been introduced at Rosindale Cottage, I have been clear-sighted enough in my retirement to discover, is a vastly insignificant sort of personage, and with so little ballast in her head, that I marvel she did not founder, whilst on the great gulf of dissipation.

“ And so you tell me, the most noble — I am seized with a resistless longing to pop in a temptingly appropriate syllable, whilst blazoning forth his style ; the most ignoble — Marquis of Silverthorn is at Paris, and has become your shadow ! Would, my dear Caroline, that the shadow were more worthy of the substance ! And you say, ‘ that this *shadowship* is performed for the *generalship* of paying court to you, to learn intelligence of me.’

“ His Lordship has my full leave to be in Paris, or at the arctic circle, provided my polar

star leads me to the antarctic, to avoid the contagion of the noxious air he breathes. ‘What,’ you may exclaim, ‘does not gratitude for the brilliant coronet he not long since offered you, awaken kinder remembrances of him?’ No, I now reply; though I now have the mortification to confess, I did once feel some attraction in that brilliant coronet, even to the extent of permitting the possessor of it to hover near me, on hope’s expanding pinions; but not one moment did I allow those wings to soar in any region that led to me, nor the disgrace of encouraging a suitor, whom I recoiled from, when I learned the atrocious fact of the unnatural monster having absolutely turned his own mother from his paternal roof, the very moment succession by the death of his father gave him power to perform this, and many other equally filial exploits. But I will now only add, that I shall most sincerely pity the wretched victim, whom the splendour of his rank and fortune, with the striking allurements of his Lord-

ship's exterior, infatuate into the misery of becoming his.

" But, my dear Caroline, to rid yourself at once of such an unworthy appendage, give him the information without delay, that he requires, comprised in this, 'that General De la Warr is in the prime of life, and enjoys excellent health, unimpaired by climate or intemperance: that no act has yet passed through both houses of Parliament, to forbid his again entering the pale of matrimony; or to arrange the settlement of his property, without the power of revocation, upon his presumptive heiresses.' Tell him this, and then add, upon my authority, ' that a Miss Awleworthy, a cordwainer's spruce daughter from the Minories, is now in his neighbourhood, absolutely at Paris, and in actual possession of ten times my attractions.' Tell him all this; and tell me of better men — of your amiable spouse, and of your well-deserved connubial happiness with the man who reflects such honour upon your voluntary choice."

" Tell me also of your child — my lovely godson ! Tell me how he crows, and how he smiles, in infantile endearing ecstasy, filling your throbbing bosom with maternal rapture, in the artless greetings that proclaim he knows his mother. This, indeed, will be interesting to the friend who loves you ; but do not again wound my affection, Caroline, by letting it appear you think so meanly of me, as to believe, however vanity may have triumphed over my youthful judgment, it has depraved my heart, by allowing that to derive pleasure in reading lines filled only with the name of an ignoble Marquis, — with such a name as that of the Peer of Silverthorn.

" I am going to perform, with *ma tante*, the unusual dissipation of a morning tour to our county town ; and as, by command of Mr. Watts, I am to take my letters to the post-office there, I am compelled to a hasty close, and briefly to assure you, that I am,

Ever yours,

O. D."

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

"*Rosindale Cottage, March 3d, 1819.*

" OUR neighbourhood increases, but not our society. In my last, had not that atrocious son and brother of the house of Silver-thorn discomposed the train of pleasanter topics, I would have informed you that the exorcists I mentioned to you turn out friends of the proprietor of our haunted castle, come hither to frolic awhile with the sprightly invaders of the ancient citadel of Menroy ; and should these attractive sprites prove of the race of white ladies, frolic with them, as tradition informs us, may turn out no very alarming sort of pastime.

" We encountered these adventurous wights, a few Sundays since, at church : and to prove the prophetic talents of my *femme de chambre*, I recognised, seated with them, as demurely as possible, our deaf and rheumatic minstrel, beaming through his laughing eyes the intel-

ligence of his having all his senses in high preservation, and evidently as little impeded by rheumatic gout as any of the trio that capered at Rosindale for his amusement. I rather suspect Mrs. Manners also recognised the culprit, her stateliness so expanded, and she looked so piteously disconcerted ; but I have never revealed to the world my penetration upon the subject, because I am aware it would increase the uneasiness of *ma tante* relative to the puerile adventure ; believing that, of course, I should take into my vain imagination my being the principal object of allurement. Yet, so far from such a supposition, I absolutely think curiosity and lack of employment led to the transgression of the poor youth ; and that hereafter, should he attempt a repetition of such exploits, it would be through the influence of the pensive Alethea's transcendent fascinations.

"Two of the companions of our minstrel, brothers, we imagine, are infinitely handsomer than he is ; for the evidently declining health of the elder, and the affectionate anxiety, as

evidently evinced for him by the younger, most powerfully excited, not only my interest, but the less easily attracted interest of Mrs. Brudenel. Indeed, so very much have our sympathies been awakened for these handsome brothers, that we have been endeavouring to penetrate a little into the history of the castle visitants; a species of curiosity that has not been pleasing to *ma tante*, who says — ‘Were these personages proper for our acquaintance, the lord of the sprightly castle,’ whom this mourning enthusiast designates as the *nonpareil* of his sex, ‘would have introduced them to her, leaving it to her own discretion to admit them at Rosindale Cottage.’

“A claimant has at length appeared for Rosindale Park, after having been sought for in daily advertisements, until a good comfortable provision was expended upon ‘*ifs* and *whereases*.’ This long looked for come at last, although lineally descended from a family proverbially proud of their high ancestral descent, has emerged from the shade of obscurity; absolutely from amidst the *canaille*;

at which our dear Madame is desperately annoyed; for, *entre nous*, Admiral Manners was distantly, *ma tante* now says *very, very* distantly, related to this ancient family; and was moreover under great obligations to the last Baronet of Rosindale Park; and besides all this, *mon oncle* means to stand for the county at the approaching election, and the interest of the Rosindale Park freeholder is worth attending to: and these combined *whys* and *wherefores* announce to Madame the arbitrary necessity of her visiting at Rosindale Park; should the character patent of this upstart Baronet bear the stamp of sterling; and so a little of pride, and a large quantum of disinclination to society, combine in murmurs against this pending flight up the eastern hill, to encounter the horrors of the gay world."

In continuation.

"We have had a visitor for some days past, in Rosindale Cottage; and every day

since his arrival I have been more and more amazed at myself, and have caught myself, ever and anon, singing from a well-remembered juvenile song—‘ Sure enough,’ says the little woman, ‘ this is none of I !’

“ But I know you like method in my narrative, and you shall have it, my lady fair, in my madness. Madness ! yes, surely ; for when I revert to the past, it strikes me with alarm that I must be *non compos* ; or perhaps *ma tante* would tell you, that it is now only the lucid beam is dawning. But to proceed. The necromancer whom I am about to present to you is in holy orders ; and when I inform you he was preceptor to General De la Warr and to my father, you must be prepared to hear that he is past the meridian of life. Time to him has not been sparing in its traces over a face and form that never could have been considered handsome ; but benignity and intellect give an interest to Mr. Stanhope that operate like magic.

“ This charming old man has ever been high in the estimation of the recluse mother and daughter, to whom he pays an annual visit

when he is in England. He accompanied *mon oncle* upon his late sudden departure for Spain, and being now the bearer of despatches from him has ensured him even an increase of welcome here. I scarcely know why, but even the very day of Mr. Stanhope's arrival I caught myself paying him the most marked attention; but possibly I was infected by the family feeling, for my aunt and coz pay homage to him with the most profound reverence. Watts, who is the regulator of us all, makes no attempt at dictating to Mr. Stanhope; and even permits our breaking up for the night without the usual broad hints, that we are trespassing beyond his patience, in his jingling of window-bells and clattering of bed-candlesticks: nay, I now walk off at even later hours than I had the credit of detaining the family up to, without his exclaiming to me as I pass, ‘What a fine pale object you will rise tomorrow morning! ’

“Mr. Stanhope has brought some intelligence to *ma tante* of *mon oncle*, which has made her very thoughtful. I have contrived

to learn that it is no alarm relative to the health of this general favourite ; for even I, though he ungallantly banished me from those scenes I thought only worth existing for, begin to feel this gallant general rising to the promotion of the first rank in my estimation, through the contagion of partiality towards him which here prevails.

" The first Sunday after the arrival of Mr. Stanhope, we again encountered the sprightly adventurers at church. Madame invited the officiating clergyman to dinner, an invitation which she might just as well have extended to the spectre *amateurs* ; but possibly Watts might have murmured, and lectured her for it ; for Watts, you must know, was the ship-steward to Admiral Manners, and received his last sigh on his bosom ; he, therefore, has been favoured with his own way in the for-ever mourning widow's family establishment, as controller of the household.

" Doctor Holland proved a cheerful well-informed man, and entered into conversation with Mr. Stanhope, such as I should never

have had the wit to listen to in town, even had opportunity been offered me; yet such as I, even I, could understand. They both had travelled, and I travelled now with them, on raft or in ship, on horse or on mule, in carriage or on foot, in hunger and thirst, but always with intense interest; and to such effect did Mr. Stanhope, in particular, conduct me from one precipitous mountain to another, through picturesque windings, and by gentle ascents, to the high Alps, there to behold the rising sun in all its awful glory, that the balm of soft repose was banished from my pillow for that night, lest I might not arise in due time to behold the grand luminary of day for the first time—yes, truly, Caroline, for the first time in my existence.

“Can you believe all this? that, through no other incentive than an old man’s eloquence, I quaked and shivered up what to my home ideas was as an Alp to me, even to the highest pinnacle of a bleak rock; and beheld in the horizon, reflected by the magic of a calm sea mirror—beheld, for the first time, that which

led me to fall prostrate in ——; but conceive for me the termination of this grand, this affecting moment.

“ On my return from this scene of two-fold wonder, that of my viewing the rising sun, and the rising sun beaming its rays upon me, I encountered Mr. Stanhope in his morning walk. His salutation expressed tones of surprise, and his aspect those of suspicion, for my appearance wore the traces of that agitated susceptibility which I had been awfully amazed into; and lest he should misconstrue my early *sortie* as having been made to fulfil an appointment, I frankly made my confession to the venerable priest. And this ingenuousness has, it seems, most fortunately, so won the favour of Mr. Stanhope, that he has condescended to much conversation with me, which has led him to bestow upon your friend invaluable information on various subjects of importance.

“ I really believe, were Mr. Stanhope fifty, or even forty years younger, he might model me (with the cost of great labour and pains,

I grant you,) into a very creditable sort of helpmate; but as he unluckily made his *début* in the world half a century too soon, I am compelled to turn my thoughts upon younger men; and those thoughts remind me to tell you, that the frigidity of the lady of the cottage towards the sprightly knights of the castle, scared them from our parish church; as, after their second appearance, they betook themselves to another at a much greater distance from Menroy.

" Our newly-found neighbours, the baronet, his better half, and a youthful son, are established at Rosindale Park, and have appeared at church; and had the trio remained in the shade of obscurity until time should have felled the genealogical tree, the pride of ancestry would have sustained no great loss—upon the point of exterior I mean, for they certainly have not features for prominence in the picture of *haut-ton*. Not all the finery which wealth and fashion ever heaped upon one votary could succeed in transforming this female favourite

of fortune into such a model as you would expect to see alight from the elegant coach, which, with the aid of four grey horses, whirled her down a short hill from her stately mansion to her parish church.

"Had I not been in serious training for the arduous exploit of parting company with my most heinous pranks, I could have obliged you with an amusing sketch of the gaudy dame of Rosindale Park ; and, at the same time, could have caricatured Dame Fortune also for you, as the veriest dolt that ever turned a wheel. Blind in good sooth ! to shower her favours upon the heads of such personages as have surprised the old stately mansion, by taking possession of it, and turning it so cruelly from the baronet of the haunted castle. But, hold ! I am unjust. It was not fortune, it was honour and filial virtue, that bereaved him, Caroline. What a pity that the stripling heir of these golden mines is not a *demoiselle*, for then she could, did she possess the *tact* for appreciating exalted honour, roll her money bags down one

hill and up another, and lay them, with an offer of her fair hand, at the owner of the sprightly castle's feet.

"This owner, you will say, ought to be the owner of a name: in truth, he has a very good one, according to fame's record. I rather think you may remember the man at Sir Walter Melmoth's. It runs in my head that I have seen him there. Sir Frederick Bolingbroke! Yes, I think, nay, I am pretty sure, I remember something of seeing him there, and for the first time, just as he gave up his large possessions to his father's creditors.

"Caroline, were it possible for gravity to assail you with the dolefuls in the gay atmosphere of Paris, I could supply you with an excellent specific. I could instruct your fancy, which I know is an excellent phantasmagorist, to present me to your vision, as I now may be seen at certain periods in Rosindale Cottage. For could you thus behold me, with that implement of industry called a needle in my fingers, if you could give credence to such a phenomenon, I think your peals of

risibility might possibly resound even to these shores. I doubt not that I may handle it as awkwardly as Hercules might have pawed the distaff of Omphale, or I have wielded his ponderous club. But I am improving, my merry gentlewoman, and have ceased to plough up the surface of my fingers so piteously, as in the onset of my formidable use of this deeply wounding spear. Mrs. Brudenel affirms, ‘that my sighs over the process no longer amount to groans;’ and Mr. Stanhope declares, ‘I moved my position, in symptoms of lassitude over the serious undertaking, not more than fifteen times in as many minutes last night,’ which mark a vast progress in improvement.

‘ You exclaim, ‘ what necessity for commencing sempstress in your cottage life?’ I reply, the contagion of industry was caught through the impossibility of remaining unemployed, fixed to the pedestal my chair as the stupid statue of idleness, whilst Mr. Stanhope has the goodness to read aloud each evening for the amusement of two of our party, and the improvement of a third. To spare you the

trouble of ineffectual guesses at whom this singularly benefited auditor can be, I announce her to you as *la belle blonde* of the *hut*. I am going to My dear Caroline's *chambre à coucher* and will write again to you. Affectionate friend,
the 1st January, 1812. OLIVIA DE LA WARR."

Dear Sir, — I hope you will be glad to receive my reply to your kind note of the 1st January, 1812.
FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

" Rosindale Cottage.

" Only conceive, Caroline, what a reformation has been effected in me by a few months' sequestration in the purifying atmosphere of this salubrious coast! I absolutely preferred remaining in my dressing-room at my studies yesterday, to uniting with my fair companions of the cot, in entertaining *un élégant, un bel homme* too! who called upon them: in fact, the nonpareil of Mrs. Manners, Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, who has rejoined his friends at the castle, and came hither immediately to pay his respects to the dame of the cottage as an old friend; but that dame, if I mistake not,

would have no objection to the name of relative as well as friend. Should my surmises be just, I shall most devoutly wish that I could emigrate to a station beneath your wing at Paris, whilst Mrs. Manners performs her experiment upon her daughter's constancy to her first attachment. Heigho! I sigh through anticipation, for I fear it will be deplorably dolorous work, to be merely a looker on during a siege of hearts.

" This Sir Frederick announced his four friends to Mrs. Manners, Messrs. Nettlethorp, Cameron, Fauconberg, and Marchmont, as half-pay officers, like himself; and made a most gallant and humble apology for the unintentional intrusion of Mr. Marchmont, our melodious visitor; so that Mrs. Manners not only pronounced his pardon, but promised to receive him cordially, in his own form, as the friend of Sir Frederick. What a change in our political atmosphere is this! Surely this Sir Frederick Bolingbroke must deal in bewitching spells." " Ma tante, notwithstanding her having all

the proprieties in her mental train of thought, word, and action, is nevertheless not devoid of female curiosity; so she inquired from the baronet, ‘Had his friends been much disturbed by mysterious visitations since their sojourn in the castle?’ Sir Frederick replied, ‘that in the castle they had yet encountered nothing preternatural; but that out of it they had been more fortunate, for that Mr. Marchmont had witnessed a most surprising transmutation of an ancient witch into a young enchantress, even upon the quiet premises of Rosindale Cottage.’

“*Ma tante* replied, ‘that was an incantation performed by the genius of volatility.’ But, oh, how I thank her kind consideration! she forbore to name the wild-goose performer of such a puerile exploit.

“The baronet next mentioned an adventure which had befallen him that very morning. ‘Whilst walking on the cliffs before breakfast with Mr. Fauconberg, they had been surprised by suddenly observing a female form gliding

along the sands below, at some distance from them. Gallantry presenting the flattering belief that it could only be the form of a Nereide, that so gracefully sported there with the missiles of the beach, they endeavoured to approach the nymph, who as suddenly vanished from mortal pursuit, they doubted not in a shelly bark on emerald waves, &c. &c.'

" A tell-tale blush betrayed the nymph in mortal form, as *ma tante* recounted this adventure to me; and who, with a smile that guaranteed her not being displeased with the rover, said—

" ' I anticipated, from the description given of this fleet vision, that this second act of necromancy was performed by the nymph Olivia; but I did not betray even my suspicions to Sir Frederick; and allowed him to wonder, nay, wondered with him, where this sea-nymph resides, and how she disappeared.'

" The magic attending my appearance and disappearance, you shall understand, Caroline, by introducing to your knowledge a certain

subterraneous passage from our cottage grounds to the sea-shore. To this passage, which is lighted the whole way by chasms in the arcade of rocks, *ma tante* had a door contrived amid the rocks, so as to escape observation ; and through all the long years in which she has mourned her gallant husband, she has been led by this passage to her favourite haunt of grief — a seat overhanging the deep ; where she has unmolested sat for many an hour, through many a year, weeping for that treasure which she had lost upon the element before her.

“ This passage of course was shown to me ; and as, since the second appearance at church of the heroes of Menroy Castle, they were never known to approach our valley, I felt no scruple in gratifying my enthusiastic admiration of the ‘vasty deep,’ at any hour which inclination prompted ; so this morning, ere my compeers in the cottage had arisen from their nests, I soared alone to the rocks above us ; and having a safe pass for making good my retreat, fearlessly descended to the beach, and

amused myself with many juvenile fancies as I roved, making eddies on the surface, that gently rolled to meet my efforts at disturbing its serenity by my missiles, until I descried the two heroes in rapid advance towards me ; and, although I perceived one of them to be the anxious and exquisitely handsome friend of the interesting and transcendently handsome invalid, Mr. Cameron, and the other as the *nonpareil* baronet himself, I had reasons for my vanishing scene ; which, it seems, I performed with fine effect upon male curiosity at least.

"I anticipate a demand from female curiosity, to learn what, in the chapter of incomprehensibilities, could have occasioned my absconding from the eye of possible admiration? Perhaps, Caroline, I apprehended my nose looked red, in consequence of my long ramble through the pinching frosty breezes. Or perhaps I thought it correct, whilst under *ma tante's* especial care, to hold converse with none of the mighty lords of the creation appertaining to her neighbourhood, who had

not received the passport of her own introduction to me. Select which it may please your penetration, of the above reasons, and establish it as resulting from the budding wisdom of

My dear Caroline's

sincere and affectionate friend,

OLIVIA DE LA WARR."

CHAPTER VI.

WE now beg leave to return to our heroes in the haunted castle. Those of them who were at Menroy, at the period of Marchmont's adventure at Rosindale Cottage, became anxious to behold those whom the fascinated minstrel portrayed in all the glowing colours of superlative admiration; and at length, on the re-opening of the parish church, that anxiety was gratified: but the displeasure evinced by the *hauteur* of Mrs. Manners, against the whole party, for the juvenile transgression of one, led to the discontinuance of their attendance at divine worship, where they were to encounter this suspicious dame. Nor were Cameron and Fauconberg sorry at this determination, neither wishing ever again to behold Olivia De la Warr, as her countenance awakened painful remembrances in the bosom of both; and reminded them, most

forcibly, of the lovely and unfortunate Alvina.

The business which called Sir Frederick from his friends, detained him beyond the period which he had anticipated; and during his protracted absence, Nettlethorp, in defiance of every impediment thrown in his way by Mr. Russet, took an active part in the agricultural concerns of his nominal partner and himself. Nettlethorp perfectly understood the theory of farming, had nothing more at heart than the advantage of Sir Frederick, and promptly felt conviction, that nothing short of knavery, or unpardonable mismanagement, could prevent the promising acres around from teeming with produce for Sir Frederick's interest.

But the interest of Sir Frederick was not that for which Mr. Russet had warily toiled. He knew perfectly well how to arrange profit and loss to whichever side his wishes pointed. His daughters, educated at the first polishing establishments for female accomplishments, were now advancing to that period when they might expect to call on him for portions. His

sons were no longer boys at school ; but smart *beaux*, entering on professions. His heir he had determined upon marrying to a neighbouring heiress, and Menroy Castle he had long looked to as a cheap purchase for this son's residence, when, through his judicious manœuvring, he should have induced Sir Frederick to part with it as a place of more expense than profit.

The plans, therefore, of Nettlethorp, for cultivating the wilds and wastes immediately surrounding the castle, with many others equally judicious, Russet absolutely refused to comply with ; but this obstacle Nettlethorp set at nought. He secured a party of honest labourers from his late regiment, disbanded soldiers, who were happy to be employed ; and to change the strenuous efforts of the sword into those of the ploughshare, under the directions of a man, now as active in the field of agriculture as he had been in that of war.

Cameron and Fauconberg had lost no time in commencing their literary labours, and proceeded steadily, whilst Marchmont every day

believed he had made up his mind upon the outline of a fable for his first tale; and every day fear presented him with a counter belief of his materials being unpromising; and, above all, that some more alert writer might have selected them before him. Thus, poor Marchmont's advance, as a public scribe, evinced little more progress than the arrangement of good pens and black ink; paper, with the margin folded with mathematical exactitude through each quire; and his writing desk cleared out, for the reception of the piles of interesting matter he meant to fabricate with all his might and main.

Russet had made no exertion in obeying the orders of his master, in improving the comforts of the castle; but the ingenuity of the inhabitants themselves, in arranging their camp equipage, had rendered their apartments far from comfortless, even before a waggon arrived from London by Sir Frederick's command, with many articles of furniture which had belonged to his father's town residence, and had been deposited in a warehouse as old

style articles, not deemed worthy of a place in the house of the new purchaser; and therefore not considered of sufficient attraction to be sent to the hammer.

This accumulation of necessaries made so conspicuous an improvement in the interior of Menroy Castle, that Sir Frederick Bolingbroke could scarcely recognise his own premises, when he at length rejoined his friends: whom, although three bright moons had now illumined their gothic casements, no decapitated multitudes had appeared in clamour for their heads; no tongueless sufferers imploring restitution of an active member; nor any one thing which even superstition could conjure into preternatural, had appeared to them, save, that once Dermod found the loading extracted from his pistols, which he had deposited in his dormitory, to annihilate the expected disturbers of "master Albert's" slumbers.

Upon the return of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke to Menroy Castle, Dermod mentioned the above alarming circumstance to the baro-

net's old steady valet, Keen, in whose mind a strong suspicion instantly arose against the hind, who, having been recommended by Russet, was of course an object of suspicion to Keen ; who had, he scarcely himself knew why, long imbibed an unvanquishable prejudice against the integrity of the specious Mr. Russet.

His suspicion thus awakened, Keen determined upon keeping a wary eye of observation, and soon detected this tool of villainy playing tricks with the grain intended for sowing ; no doubt, for the purpose of thwarting the promising speculations of Mr. Nettlethorp.

Upon this discovery, the hind was instantly dismissed from his station at Menroy Castle ; and with him his wife also : the inmates of the castle preferring every privation of culinary comfort, to retaining in their service any individual belonging to so unprincipled a miscreant.

But they were not long doomed to this privation of their comforts ; for the most

active of Nettlethorp's martial band of fellow-labourers — the one, on whom the nomination of successor to the unfaithful hind had fallen — offered his better half, "as a person fully competent to the post of filling up the vacancy their household had sustained; as she had been accomplished for such an undertaking under the tuition of the famous Deb Lancefield, who had immortalized her skill in the art of cookery, as well as her honourable economy, when she had had the honour of suttling their regiment abroad :" and whilst our party of poor bachelors were expatiating upon the promising omen of good luck, in procuring a pupil of the celebrated Deb for their kitchen-factotum, a loud and lengthened peal from the portal announced some important and importunate visitants. In a moment more, the clattering of horses' hoofs, and the whirl of carriage wheels rapidly passing over the draw-bridge, were heard; and scarcely a succeeding interval elapsed, ere Dermod O'Chanter, with eyes starting from their

sockets, and panting for breath, rushed into the room ; and, as echo to their own herald's proclamation of their style, announced —

“ Sir Cornelius and Lady Lancefield !”

“ It is game they are making,” added Dermod, lowering his voice, as he performed a significant nod at his ‘ master dear ;’ “ going as witnesses, I suppose, upon a court-martial, in some grand body’s state-coach. Any how, ‘tis a quare liberty, your honour, to be humbugging their betters, and bad manners to them !”

CHAPTER VII.

SIR Cornelius and Lady Lancefield were scarcely announced, ere Deb appeared, attired in the very extremity of fashion. Her better half, the *ci-devant* serjeant, accoutred also by the hand of wealth and *ton*; but, not like his spouse, grinning for joy, he looked conscious that he was out of his element; nor, without much solicitation, could he be prevailed upon to seat himself in the presence of those whom he had long obeyed as his commanders. Not so the happy Deb, who entered in the quick step; and, with extended hands, looking in their white kid covering like the expanded blades of a windmill, vehemently denoted her heartfelt pleasure at thus meeting with her old masters.

“ Heaven bless your honours all!” she exclaimed, “ and send you as high luck as that blinking whirligig, madame Fortune, has

unexpectedly showered down in a volley upon Bousy Corney here. I concludes, my dear *gentilshommes*, you must have been all stagnated with surprise like, to hear ‘that none could be found to step into dead men’s shoes but Serjeant Tipple?’ Ah, *pardi!*” shrugging her shoulders, “but your honours could not have been more astounded than ourselves. And clumsy, *en conscience*, we takes to our grandeur; hardly knowing, *sur ma vie!* which end of it to lay hold on. But, howsomedevour, there is no fear of taking the purse by the wrong end; even howsobe as we draws of both ends. So, your honours — ah, hem! — pray, excuse her you have known as strapping Deb, when you finds her but a Joan of a baronet’s lady, your honours. But, a — a — that is, should your honours, dear young *gentilshommes*, want a loan of — of the needful at any time, Curnailus, who can never speak for himself, a great looby! bade me say, ‘that there is the firm of Lancefield and Co., upon which your honours will please to draw at sight: folks, as

keeps a banking-shop, which you will never find in 'Change Alley.'

Scarcely would the happy Deb permit their amazed and grateful honours the utterance of one word of acknowledgment for this heart-directed kindness, so great was her impatience to impart to them the overflowings of her surcharged mind.

"*Parbleu!*" she emphatically cried, "but I am so nation glad to see you once more, my dear young *gentilshommes*, I cannot impress my sackisfaction. Curnailus and I did but just learn who our kind stars had given us for neighbours; and scarce a *morceau* of *déjeûner* did we rest on our arms for, we were in such a fluster to pay our duty to your honours; and to note it down in the orderly book of your memories, 'that the new owners of Rosindale Park will never feel so proud of their prosperity, as when it pleases their honours of Menroy Castle to be their guests.' When we were *gens de petite étoffe*; and your honours on the muster of Fortune's favourites,

you treated us, at all times, as though we were of the same specious [species]. Even you, Mr. Nettlethorp, though you have, ere now, called *pauvre moi* ‘a saucy faggot!’ I was not a faggot to smother up the embers of resentment; but one, *sur ma vie!* that will blazon up for joy, on seeing you in a house of mine, worthy of receiving your honour.”

Not more did the cheeks of the veteran, Sir Cornelius, glow with bashfulness, on feeling himself actually familiarly seated with those whom subordination had long drawn such a line of demarcation between, than those of Nettlethorp now flushed with shame and confusion, at this recollected extempore of his unqualified displeasure; whilst conscience assured him, that had not Lady Lancefield’s forgiving propensities been more on the alert than her memory, she might have overwhelmed him with blushes for epithets requiring even more contrition.

Every time the new baronet of Rosindale Park summoned sufficient courage for the achievement of addressing his late command-

ers, he so “please-your-honoured” them, that at length the impetuous Nettlethorp exclaimed : —

“ Zounds, man ! if you march on in that old track, we dare not show our noses in your hospitable mansion. How would it sound, pray, for the ancient baronet of Rosindale Park to be honouring his guests in every sentence ? ”

The loquacious Deb, to evince her three years’ residence in France, by her acquisition of the art of complimenting, instantly replied : —

“ Indeed, Mr. Nettlethorp, though Curnailus Lancefield cannot honour his guests too much for their merit, when his guests are their honours of Menroy Castle, it will, *en werité* ! be a shame if he does not rouse up into a little spunk of the *bon air*, as I means to do ; for thof, as the French folks says, *l'or donne de la beauté à une femme*, I will never rest stagnated like my master ; content at being the make-game of the quality that keep flocking to Rosindale Park to pay their

respects to him: not, your honours," she continued, taking a long inspiration, as a necessary store: "not for loving, nor liking, through old respect for his honesty and bravery; but to wheedle him out of his interest in making parliament men. *Pardi!* what lots on them have been coming and sending already on all sides! even the minister, though he saved the coldest pew in all the church for us; *parbleu!* but it gives me the aguer to think on it; and besides, too, let the old ancient family wault run, with its inhabitants, to decay. And shoals, too, your honours, of those as call themselves Whigs; but, what a little mean cake can have to do with the parliament of England, I knows no more than I did before I was my lady: but suppose, whilst our minister reads about loaves and fishes, the others talks of cakes and ale.

"But, *sur ma foi!* if Curnailus has really the power of making parliament men, like a gingerbread baker, it would be rum manners in him to pass Menroy Castle in his first batch; thof, so be, as he must drop a mould

for one on the way up, at Rosindale Cottage ; for, *entre nous !* our dear general's sister, Madam Manners, has been canvassing us a bit already ; and poor flimsy stuff this same canvass, as they calls it, is ! *Pardi !* a blind body might see through it. Not a painter of them all can daub out the light that glares through. So, I says to Curnailus, ‘ though *il y en ait beaucoup qui adorent le soleil levant*, that, when this election bout is over, the chance is, those civil folks will forget their manners, and begin their jeers at the *petite gens* aping grandes ; unless we can contrive to scrub up a polish.

“ As ill luck would have it, your honours, I have forgotten all my inquiries in foreign lingoes, except, as my boy Julius (Julius) says, ‘ my lapsus lingoes ;’ my French, I suppose, the dear boy means : for I still, having been learned that in Paris from gentlefolks, *parlez vous*. But, your honours, my Spanish and my Portuguese, and my spattering (smattering) of Italian, is quite and clean gone ; which my Julius, who is always setting me to rights,

when there is nobody to hear him ; ay, your honours, with the tears in his very eyes, *mon mignon !* for it is a sad grief to the dear boy to have parents that, he being so knowledgeable, makes him blush for. But, my Julius says, ‘ that larding my wulgar tongue with the beacon of foreign markets, is like decking a linsey-woolsy coat with oriental gems.’ So, my plan, my dear *gentilshommes*, for ‘ becoming genteel, is to go abroad, where gold can get us into high company ; and where, as I says, ‘ from not being natives of those foreign courts, our rum ways will not strike so glarefully : and so then, perhaps, after picking up polish from the emery of good company we rubs in compact with, we may return to old England, so furbished up as to escape the jeers of those, who being bred in high speers, knows how to behave by aspiration.’ ”

Their honours being unanimous in approbation of Lady Lancefield’s judicious plan, made her happy by applauding the good sense which had suggested the intended measure.

“ For my boys,” resumed Lady Lancefield,

" I have mucked and mired all their born days to get them up in the world ; for I was always amphibious [ambitious]. Julius, *bien aimé*, has none of our vulgar ways. The pure blood of the ancient Lancefields found in his weins its own congenite course ; at least if the doting mother's partiality does not make her a blind judge ; or her poison ignorance, mayhap, making her no judge at all. But your honours, dear, kind *gentilshommes*, often praised him as a genii, and admired his verses, and his genteel look, and behaviour above his speer ; for I kept him almost constant at boarding-school, and at his own request, *mon ange !* fitted him for a servitor's place at Oxford College. But now, *sur ma foi !* he needs be no servant, but a master there. Danel [Daniel], I would fain have kept also at his learning ; but Bousy chose to make a *balourd* on him ; and many a skirmish we have had, on his wanting to make a fifer on him. *Pardi !* but it was good luck for the poor boy, that by some foreknowledgeable impulsh, I would not describe to that freak.

But how so be, your honours, Danel, ever turning genteel, will inquire all the manners to be bought, borrowed, begged, and stolen ; for *hélas ! on ne sauroit faire d'une bûse un épervier.*

“ But the worst of all, your honours, is Curnailus himself. We can get an hopperar dancing-master to come down to drill us for table ; to send the *mouchoir* from our knees to the right about, and to keep our knives out of the saltsellers, and all that there ; but if the Baronet does not leave off chucking down comforts from the Lake of Geneva, as Julius terms his father’s cordial sin, he will be the ruin of us all, your honours. Howsomdevour, rum as we are behind the curtain, we must not set out as *gens de néant*, in our grand habitation ; and the bowsy Baronet and his Lady Joan, not knowing how to do the honours of a table, garnished out with a servitude of gold-plate, and surrounded with a grand brigade of household troops, I thinks of opening the campaign, as gentlefolks, with a sumpter ball ; for your honours knows, as we can get

tradesfolks of note from Lunnun, to manage all in the most superfluous style, and that the cards, and the dancing, and the feasting, and the looking after sweethearts, will misopalize the intention of the company from the rum ways of their host and hostess. ‘ Ah ! *mon Dieu !*’ with a heavy sigh, and shrug of her shoulders — “ all your honours might go off decently, if a certain person would but steer clear of that *diable* of a Lake of Geneva.”

Again their honours approved of Deb’s plan, and made her heart bound with grateful joy at their condescension, in requesting her and her brave helpmate to remain at the Castle, to partake of their bachelors’ fare at dinner that day ; and by her ready acceptance of this friendly invitation, the comforts of our subalterns found a perceptible increase ; for the Baronet’s lady could not restrain her new dignity in idleness, whilst her natural propensity to activity could discover any thing to employ her ; and in defiance of her impeding “ wandyke flounces,” with which she was now abundantly supplied, she routed about through

all the premises, setting every thing and every body in order ; and wherever she perceived any deficiency in their scanty muster of comforts, she marked it down amid her mental memoranda, and had it silently supplied the following day from her superfluities.

The integrity of Deb and Serjeant Lancefield had been so unimpeachable, whilst in their inferior station, that our Menroy subalterns conceived it no degradation to their own dignity, to make their honest hearts glad, by evincing the respect of former estimation of their worth, and made no hesitation in accepting their hospitable invitation to their festive board ; where, knowing that it would be taken as kindness, they gave the new Baronet and his industrious spouse much useful instruction relative to their conduct in society.

To Sir Cornelius it was but the continuation of long usage, obeying their honours to the very letter of the law. Their kind hints he therefore acted upon, to the utmost of his ability, as commands to be executed with all the powers of unquestioning submission ; but

not with the same degree of natural ease could the worthy Baronet attempt to forget that the line of subordination had been removed by fate; and to make bold to entreat their acceptance of kindness from him so paralyzed his oral faculties, that he could find no disposable force of words to call into action when he wished to speak his mind: he was therefore compelled at length to have recourse to his pen, and in his very best manner he wrote upon a slip of paper, which, with a palpitating heart, a glowing cheek, and trembling hand, he took an opportunity to present to Fauconberg, as the one of all he felt least abashed at taking such a liberty with —

“ Please your honours,

“ There is an assortment of horses and carriages of all descriptions, set up at livery, on the premises of Rosindale Park, by an old veteran serjeant of your late most honourable corps; and the aforesaid rough old soldier takes the liberty of humbly requesting your custom on all occasions; and he makes bold

to add, that the welcome commands of your honours will be thankfully obeyed, by

Your honours

Most obliged, most grateful,

And most obedient servant,

CORNELIUS LANCEFIELD."

CHAPTER VIII.

As their honours had graciously signified their unqualified approbation of Lady Lancefield's intended ball, she lost no time in issuing cards to announce her being "At Home" on a particular evening; and the parliamentary interest of Sir Cornelius being great, the numbers who had paid their compliments at Rosindale Park occasioned a numerous issue of cards through a very populous and extensive neighbourhood.

As Mrs. Morton Manners was in the secret of her brother's intention of standing for the county at the approaching election, she considered it incumbent upon her to confer upon Lady Lancefield the honour of attending her ball; and in the true spirit of electioneering homage, to prevail upon her daughter to accompany her. But it had proved no easy task to obtain the acquiescence of the fair

mourner, for her appearing in so gay an assemblage as that about to be collected at Rosindale Park: however, for her beloved uncle's interest, Mrs. Brudenel hushed the murmurs of her feelings, and gave at length her reluctant assent.

This disinclination to appear in scenes of revel, Mrs. Manners had expected in her daughter; but to encounter reluctance to attend this *gala*, in her lively niece, had never entered into her calculations. Infinite, therefore, was her astonishment, when Olivia begged to decline the invitation of Lady Lancefield; and led on by her surprise, Mrs. Manners requested to know the motive which could actuate so unexpected — so unnatural a negative.

After a brilliant blush, and a moment of hesitation, Olivia replied — “ Fears for my own propriety of conduct, madam.”

Mrs. Manners, still more amazed, desired some elucidation.

“ My dear aunt,” replied Olivia, after another moment of embarrassed hesitation — “ I have

you not observed how, at the most untoward moment, the ridiculous irresistibly seizes upon my unbridled fancy? I therefore very much fear incorrigible misconduct on beholding Lady Lancefield's performances on the occasion."

"I have no fears, Olivia," returned Mrs. Manners; "your *politesse* must prove an infallible antidote; and, for your uncle's sake, you must conquer the evil spirit of satire, on an occasion that arbitrarily calls you to the ball of Lady Lancefield. The electioneering interest of your uncle, my dear Olivia, demands that we should evince no slight to the family of Rosindale Park."

At this moment Sir Frederick Bolingbroke was announced, when Olivia, starting from her seat, said she must fly off to write for a dress becoming the importance of her uncle's interest, for her appearance at the ball; and on entering her own apartments, she perceived she had been closely followed thither by Mrs. Brudenel, who instantly threw herself into a seat, and burst into tears. With difficulty the

amazed and agitated Olivia could suppress a rising flow of sympathy.

"Alas!" exclaimed the lovely mourner—"what can my beloved mother mean, by thus urging me to appear in gay assemblies; and in thus encouraging the visits of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke? I know she sent him a note this morning, relative to a fence which Watts might just as well have arranged with Sir Frederick's bailiff, and not for my mother to have adopted a measure, which, through his politeness, has drawn him hither."

"For some days past, Olivia, I have remarked my mother's unusually emphatic manner of eulogizing Sir Frederick. That he is amiable and interesting to a great degree, I feel thoroughly convinced; but my mother is mistaken, if she thinks any man in existence can obliterate that image, which love, esteem, and veneration, consecrated in my bosom. From my very infancy my dear mother trained my ductile heart for constancy ^{to} attachment. She set me the example of unfaltering steadiness in sorrow. Grief has

become to me a second self ; to part from it would now be to realize the paradox of consigning me to wretchedness. Mine is not now, my dear Olivia, as in its first indulgence, the grief of lamentation and repining ; it has softened to almost happiness ; calm and patient in the sable cloud, in which I am travelling imperceptibly to those regions of eternity, where I shall regain my precious treasure."

The tears of Mrs. Brudenel now had ceased, and sublimated hope and joy so illumined her lovely countenance with an animated expression of a heavenly stamp, that Olivia beheld her with reverence, mingled with sympathy, convinced that her cousin's tenderest affections were no longer destined for a mortal ; and from this moment she considered her as the recluse of a monastery, whose irrevocable vows had reared a barrier between her and every sublunary hope and joy.

The fair cousins were lost in deep meditation upon the subjects above referred to, when Mrs. Brudenel received a summons to attend her mother without delay.

Alarmed and agitated, Alethea quitted the apartments of her cousin to obey the hasty mandate, first requesting Olivia to accompany her; but Olivia presented her negative, by reminding Alethea, "that had her aunt desired her presence, the summons would have extended to her."

From the reduction of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke's revenue, he considered himself completely devoted to single blessedness, until the emancipation of his estates. To guard his affections, therefore, from every tender attachment, which might strew thorns along the honourable path which he had voluntarily entered, had long been his anxious endeavour; and had he not felt assured, that Mrs. Brudenel was too irrevocably devoted to the memory of her departed husband, ever to enter into any new engagement, he might not have so readily adopted the *politesse* of answering the billet of Mrs. Manners in person. For though he felt that a woman whose heart had been so confessedly devoted to another, would not be the spontaneous object of his choice, yet he

knew Mrs. Brudenel was infinitely too fascinating for any man to consider himself perfectly secure of his affections, if admitted to intimacy in her mother's family. Nay, even could he have looked for success in such a project, Sir Frederick's sensitive feelings of honour would have led him far from Rosindale Cottage, lest the mercenary motive might be imputed to him, of seeking out a wealthy heiress in the lovely widow, to clear off his incumbrances ; but believing Mrs. Brudenel as much out of the question in matrimonial speculation, as Mrs. Manners herself, he fearlessly entered the white cottage of Rosindale, and scarcely had the customary salutations passed between him and his respected friend, ere Watts unceremoniously bounced into the room.

It has been observed, in the correspondence of Miss De la Warr to Lady Caroline Townly, that Watts, from peculiar circumstances, had been permitted unrestrainedly to erect himself into controller of the household at Rosindale Cottage. This self-importance, uncurbed by

that *etiquette* to which he must have submitted, had Mrs. Manners mixed with the world, led him to consider whatever business occupied him for the moment, as of the very first importance ; and his purposes so seldom having been impeded by visitors of any description, he no longer thought of allowing aught to retard its discussion with ‘ The Madam,’ as he always termed the widow of his beloved and lamented Admiral ; and, according to his established custom, he now flung open the door, exclaiming :—

“ There, madam ! all has happened as I foretold ; and a fine breeze Miss has sprung up, by her wilful ways of not being guided by my advice ! The rigging she promised Dame Hanker, and bore all sail to get in readiness, but flung overboard this morning to that canting hypocritical trampér, against all my cautions and advice, have been popped in the village for flip and grog ; and Dame Hanker has hoisted her signals of distress for the promised rigging.”

"Tell the messenger to wait until I am at leisure," said Mrs. Manners, highly disconcerted at this unopportunely display of the controller of her household's free and easy assumption.

"The thing's impossible, madam; at least Dame Hanker cannot rest on her oars, whilst Miss stitches up more rigging to supply that she chose to cast away on the shoals of imposture. My opinion is, we had better redeem the rigging now in pawn."

"Request Mrs. Brudenel to come to me immediately," said Mrs. Manners.

Watts obeyed, and the reluctant Alethea attended the summons of her mother, who informed her, "that one of her cousin's exploits, by giving to one craving applicant the donation of clothing prepared for another, having caused a little embarrassment, which she was called upon to rectify, she had sent for her to become her substitute, in entertaining her old friend during her unavoidable absence."

Sir Frederick now made an effort to depart, conjecturing that his presence might not be convenient at this moment; but Mrs. Manners would not permit it. "For you know," she said, "we have not yet arranged the business which your politeness brought you hither to discuss."

The moment Mrs. Brudenel found herself alone with Sir Frederick, conscious embarrassment, awakened by her suspicion relative to her mother's plans, led her with rapidity to break the pause in conversation, so apprehensive was she of its proving an awkward one.

"I am almost not sorry," said she, "at the embarrassment which my mother is now called upon to rectify, since I have no doubt of its producing a salutary effect upon those spontaneous feelings of benevolence, which sometimes lead our young votary of pity into errors, and which my mother has been anxious to restrain by the sober influence of prudent caution; whilst she has felt apprehensive, that in this endeavour she might introduce also the chilling blight of cold and heartless suspicion

into the ardent unsophisticated mind of my fair cousin."

"Is this fair cousin, of whose benevolence you draw so fascinating a portrait, Mrs. Brudenel, the sibyl of whom my intrusive friend presented us with an enchanting delineation?" demanded Sir Frederick, with a smile.

"The very same," responded Alethea. "But the fascinating minstrel, who visited Rosindale Cottage, could only present you with a sketch of volatility, exhibited for the benevolent purpose of making my poor babe happy... To those who reside beneath the same roof with this sibyl you must apply for the portraiture of her more solid qualifications, of which few young persons possess a more precious store than this identical damsel of volatile fame, Olivia De la Warr."

Sir Frederick, starting, stooped to recover his glove, which at that moment he had dropped; and, as he raised his head, discovered his fine and intelligent countenance suffused with the deepest tints of carmine; perhaps through the revulsion his bending forward had occasioned,

but Mrs. Brudenel did not so construe it, as, in something of a tremulous voice, he said—

" You cannot mean Miss De la Warr! Olivia De la Warr! the ward of Sir Walter Melmoth, is now at Rosindale Cottage?"

" Indeed I do mean it, Sir Frederick. Olivia De la Warr's father was my mother's youngest brother; and Olivia has been at Rosindale Cottage, adding to the charms of our retirement, under the care of her new guardian, my mother, for some months past."

" I am astonished," returned Sir Frederick; " I really had imagined the air of the country, like that ascribed to the upas*, would have exhaled the death-warrant of Miss De la Warr in a very few hours. Besides, I had cherished no expectation of hearing of her more, under her paternal appellation. When I took my last departure from England, I was firm in belief that I should next behold her as Countess of Headland."

" I perceive," replied Alethea, with one of her sweet though serious smiles, " that you

* Poison tree.

do not know the real Olivia De la Warr. She has only appeared to you in the frivolity of her London disguise. At Rosindale Cottage she shall unveil for you, and at least surprise, by her mental excellence!"

"I very much fear," returned Sir Frederick, in a suppressed and tremulous tone, "I must not flatter myself by the hope of this promised gratification; as I—I expect important business to call me hence. And perhaps that very business may prove my friend; for mental excellence, combined with transcendent beauty, might prove a dangerous contemplation for a man who ought not to think of any thing forbidden by a sequestered fortune."

"Nay," said the pensive Alethea, with a gentle effort at gaiety, "but prudence need not say a negative to admiration excited by an affluent charmer. However," she continued, fearing her own awakening wishes had led her too far for her cousin's delicacy, "though great Olivia's mental treasure, she is nevertheless a wild bird, that will, I fancy, prove so difficult to catch, that the fowler will be wise

who avoids the serious attempt until a few more years ——”

At this moment Mrs. Manners re-entered, and her daughter, not choosing to close her speech before her, and to avoid any pause which might wear an embarrassing appearance on either side, instantly exclaimed —

“ Oh, mamma! Sir Frederick Bolingbroke is acquainted with Olivia!”

“ Indeed,” responded Mrs. Manners, drily.

“ But,” said Mrs. Brudenel, addressing Sir Frederick, “ I fear Mr. Marchmont is not an equal proficient in all the arts and sciences, or in his portraiture of our spectacled Hecate he must have brought Olivia De la Warr to your remembrance, in her very act of transmuting into Madame Terpsichore.”

“ Marchmont proved himself an able artist,” returned Sir Frederick, blushing as he spoke; “ for I thought only of the wild Olivia De la Warr whilst he portrayed the Rosindale sorceress; and should at once have personified the enchantress of his delineation, could I have

conceived her existence out of the gay world a possible occurrence."

Mrs. Manners now dexterously turned the conversation to a new point, by inquiring for the interesting Cameron; and soon, after fully discussing the subject of the fence in question, the visit of the Baronet was terminated by his impatience to commune with his own thoughts, and to lull the ominous perturbation which the unexpected intelligence of Olivia De la Warr being so near a neighbour had awakened in his bosom.

As our reader may have already divined, Sir Frederick Bolingbroke was no other than the identical individual who had, by his unexpected declaration of never having bestowed a thought upon her, piqued Olivia's vanity into a determination that he should think of her; a determination, aided by the dangerous enthusiasm with which she viewed his conduct relative to his filial virtues, which led her into the exploit of thinking more of him than accorded with her own tranquillity.

The period in which Sir Frederick had been excited, through his disapprobation of Olivia's coquetry, to the above ungallant reply, was exactly that in which he was deliberating within himself, whether the sacrifice he had already made for the ransom of his father's honour should not know a further extent.

The beauty and playful fascinations of Olivia had made so deep an impression on this young man's fancy, even in their first interview, that it had required every exertion of his prudence to quench the rising flame, by seeking for and dwelling upon the flagrant errors in her rearing. But when in her sportive sally she challenged him to think upon her, and that instead of betraying indignation at the candid criticism he hazarded, she commenced so flattering a career of apparent reformation, his heart and prudence were menaced with complete subjugation ; and he was lured on to a decision of not making his filial sacrifice so total as he at that moment had power to do ; but to retain an estate of one thousand pounds per annum lately devolved to him,

which the enchanting form Olivia had assumed in flattering homage to his opinions, assured him she would deem a perfect sufficiency with the man she loved, until his sequestered property should be returned to him unencumbered.

Thus, full of love and hope, Sir Frederick attended the already mentioned ball, when Olivia De la Warr's not yet subdued spirit of coquetry restored his heart to the influence of prudence. He fled from the fascinations of Olivia to France, first arranging with his solicitors for the estate in question to be placed in sequestration with his others, for the benefit of his father's creditors.

But though prudence thus resumed her empire over the mind of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, he found it a vain effort for a considerable time to eradicate the deep impression the enchantments of Olivia had made upon his heart. At length he returned to England, assured that the magic of her influence was past, and that he could encounter her, even as Countess of Headland, without the smallest perturbation ; yet, from some inexplicable

cause, whenever the impulse arose for the gratification of his curiosity, he failed in resolution to make the inquiry, whether she had bestowed herself upon the most profligate amongst the sons of Plutus?

As Sir Frederick had acknowledged to Mrs. Brudenel, during Marchmont's description of the witch of Rosindale Cottage, that he thought only of Olivia De la Warr as the prototype of this wild fascinator; but—as he did not acknowledge—its being with an alarming degree of nervous agitation, which wholly disconcerted him, he took his rebellious heart once more to task upon the folly and madness of its lingering weakness; and again reasoned into apparent convalescence of affection, he visited his old friend in Rosindale Cottage without suspicion of the perilous influence it contained; although the phantom of the rock, chased so vainly by him and Fauconberg, had borne such a striking similitude to the gracefully agile movements of the fair and fickle Olivia, that his prudence had felt new alarms, and had a new course of tutoring to undergo.

But when at length he did discover that this redoubted enchantress was so near him, and yet a spinster, Sir Frederick, after the first moments of agitated surprise, bore the intelligence with much greater firmness than his first betraying start could have guaranteed for; since, so inexplicable are the whims of doubting love, the encomiums so lavishly bestowed by her lovely cousin upon her mental virtues, awakened the singular effect of disapprobation rather than any admiration menacing his repose; for he, at once, placed this exhibition of mental virtues to the deep guise of Olivia's art, to lure for her vanity the food it coveted.

"Yes, yes," he mentally exclaimed, as he lingered on his way homeward, "that same direfully distorting vanity which led her heart into its degrading encouragement of a hoary-headed profligate, on whom no woman of inborn delicacy could have beamed a smile of approbation; yes, that vanity has plunged her deeper, and still deeper, in all its deceitful vortices. In the retirement of Rosindale there could be no admiration elicited, except

for mental excellence; and she assumed the semblance of those virtues a pupil of Lady Melmoth never knew, to win the flattering admiration of the guileless females of the cottage."

"Oh, Olivia! where has that ingenuous spirit strayed which befitted a mould so heavenly! But am I just, am I charitable, in thus condemning her? Indeed I am not! Can I ever lose the remembrance of that angelic form she assumed to lure me into the perilous belief she was changing to perfection? Can the pang I felt, when she dropped the veil, and betrayed the guile by which she had deluded me, ever be erased from the records of my heart's memory? And if it cannot, why should I shun her? Can I, ought I, to fear her? Is my estimation of female excellence, is my own individual worth, so superficial, as to be vanquished by the alluring smiles of an enchantress; who could smile on unmasked vice, and stoop to false appearances to beguile? No, no, I need not fly; for in my firm conviction of her possessing no mental excel-

lence, I possess a shield of invulnerability against whatever form of fascination she may assume. Form of fascination! ay, like that in which she glided o'er the rocks in. Oh, what sportive grace! what — But it was all to lure the strangers, no matter of what stamp, she saw approaching. Incorrigibly vain coquette! how I despise your wiles; and will fearlessly brave your potent spells at Rossendale Park next Thursday."

CHAPTER IX.

THE very first opportunity which presented itself for confidential communications, after the last-mentioned visit of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, Mrs. Manners, with an evident diminution of cordiality towards her niece, addressed Olivia thus : —

“ I find, from Alethea, that Sir Frederick Bolingbroke is an acquaintance of yours, Miss De la Warr ; and this being the case, I confess I cannot but feel surprise at your never honouring him by any sort of recognition, when hearing me talk of him as my highly respected young friend and neighbour.”

Olivia blushed to the most brilliant tint of vermillion, and tears started to her eyes ; yet she spoke not, for at that moment articulation was suspended.

Mrs. Manners continued — “ And further, my surprise has been considerably awakened

by recollection of your having, when he was announced, absolutely fled to another room. Is that your usual mode, Miss De la Warr, to flee when your friends approach?"

"Yes, madam, when I am ashamed to meet those friends," Olivia with difficulty now articulated, so great was her conflict with her struggling tears.

"Ashamed to meet them! You alarm me, child! What could cause such a sensation on the approach of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke?"

"My own misconduct, madam," responded the ingenuous Olivia, now overwhelmed in tears, which no exertion could repress. "The last time I ever met Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, I performed an exploit which must have deprived me of his esteem; since, which was much worse, it degraded me in my own!"

"My poor dear child!" exclaimed Mrs. Manners, now clasping the bitterly sobbing Olivia to her bosom with maternal tenderness; whilst Mrs. Brudenel, in tears of sympathy, pressed her cousin's cold and tremulous hand with affection's fervent interest.

"Will you not explain yourself, my love? Surely you know you may safely confide in the tender friends who love you," said Mrs. Manners, kindly.

"My dear, dear, kind friends!" responded Olivia, endeavouring to suppress those tears which this sympathetic tenderness had caused to flow even more copiously. "At a fatal ball I degraded the delicacy of my mind, by giving such encouragement to a notorious libertine, that he was led on to make me a serious offer. But I can affirm in my vindication to you, that I knew not of Lord Headland's profligacy when I did so. But, alas! neither Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, nor any other individual present, save Lady Melmoth, knew of my total ignorance upon the subject; can I, therefore, doubt how much they must all despise me?"

"It was a most unfortunate circumstance; but as you were innocent of intentional error, by your total ignorance of the man's vices, you need not so severely judge yourself, my poor Olivia," exclaimed Mrs. Brudenel, eagerly.

"As to Sir Frederick, one word from mamma will at once exonerate you from his unmerited suspicion."

"Oh, no," replied Olivia, with quickness. "To vindicate me to Sir Frederick would seem as if I highly prized his good opinion, and might —— at least, I do not particularly covet Sir Frederick Bolingbroke's favourable opinion, Alethea."

"But I cannot endure that he should believe you encouraged the addresses of a man you knew renowned for profligacy," returned Mrs. Brudenel. "I, therefore, must have him undeceived, mamma; for he mentioned to me his belief of Olivia's determination to accept this libertine peer!"

"Oh, happy Alethea!" exclaimed Olivia in a touchingly subdued voice; "reared by such a mother, you can never have retrospections to tinge your cheeks with blushes; but I had a preceptress who—who was not like my aunt. And, indeed, the disgraceful cause of my present blushes was not exactly the inspiration of my own thoughtlessness, for it was Lady Mel-

moth who put the mischief into my wise head. Alas! how may one blush of shame call up another! and when once a vain coquette commences her confession, they need have patience who listen to her shrift.

“ You have now to hear, if your kind indulgence will admit my follies, as part of my defence, that a nominal friend of mine,—in fact, as dire a foe as rivalry in the contest for universal admiration could transform her into,—had been engaged for some time in every possible exploit to provoke me, and, as Lady Melmoth pronounced them, ‘ abominable malevolence,’ I was very angry with my dear friend; and, on my way to the memorable ball I have alluded to, I said to Lady Melmoth, ‘ I hoped some fair opportunity might arise at the ball for my retaliating vexation upon Miss Daggerly;’ and so, after the termination of a quadrille, whilst I was quietly conversing with Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, thinking at that precise moment less of coquetish pranks than in any preceding one of my life, Lady Melmoth seated herself behind me, and softly whispered,

‘ Now is your time, Olivia, for vengeance upon the Daggerly, who is mining with all her might and main to obtain Lord Headland’s coronet. Look ! there her noble prey stands lost in admiration of you, to her evident dismay. Play your cards judiciously. His lordship’s *only* foible is excessive vanity ; attack that, and your innocent triumph over the malicious Daggerly will be complete.’

“ And I did comply with her advice, and my triumph was to attract an aged profligate, through the debasing lure of homage to his vanity ; and amongst my renowned achievements on the occasion, I but narrowly escaped proving myself an arrant jilt to this celebrated peer. But one, amid the tissue of my praiseworthy exploits, I did not escape achieving, that of making Sir Frederick Bolingbroke despise me ; for when in the zenith of my exultation on having transfixed the sage defaulter by my side, the look of mingled pity and contempt Sir Frederick beamed upon me as he precipitately quitted the ball-room — — ”

“ Sir Frederick Bolingbroke beam a look of

pity and contempt upon you, my dear child!" exclaimed Mrs. Manners, in painful amazement.

"So I construed the expression of his look, madam," replied Olivia, with strong emotion, which vainly sought concealment; "and which mortified me, I confess, because—because he was thought by all so amiable."

"Pray, my dear Olivia," said Mrs. Manners, after a thoughtful pause, "may I take the liberty of asking you—did Sir Frederick Bolingbroke profess himself your lover?"

"No, madam," returned Olivia, artlessly, "I allowed no time for that, ere I discovered my cloven foot. We were only just beginning to become very seriously friends and allies, after indifference on his part amounting to almost lack of common urbanity, and on mine all that was repulsive in folly, sauciness, and affectation. And now, my dear aunt, as fate has untowardly resolved upon our becoming near neighbours, I suppose we must meet again as we first set out, with disgust and con-

tempt on one side, and continued mortification on the other."

"I should think not," responded Mrs. Manners. "Where sensations are excited, requiring such forcible language to express them, I think things are likely to take some decisive turn."

"But, my dear aunt," said Olivia, now alarmed lest she had erred, in permitting the ingenuousness of her nature to lead her into confiding so much to Mrs. Manners of her former situation relative to Sir Frederick, lest such communications might interfere with her aunt's wishes; "but, my dear madam, do not imagine, from what I have uttered, that I conceive Sir Frederick was absolutely, or was about to be, my lover; for—for I am much more, nay, I am thoroughly convinced, he merely commenced his friendly alliance with me in compassion, on perceiving, possibly through some little cranny not quite choked up by the noxious weeds of folly, that the natural soil was not wholly unreclaimable; but

on finding it almost a forlorn hope, he beamed his look of pity from the feeling heart of disappointed benevolence."

"I doubt not that it did spring from a disappointed heart," thought Mrs. Manners, who now feared that all her hopes relative to Alethea and Sir Frederick had been aërial structures, the foundation of which had been destroyed by Olivia's potent charms.

On the other hand, Mrs. Brudenel hoped that the evident project of her mother had now encountered an invincible barrier; and this hope imparted unusual cheerfulness to her spirits, so that, to the utter amazement of Mr. Stanhope, he found her by far the least pensive of the party he rejoined at the cottage on his return from the post town, where he had found a letter awaiting his arrival from his highly regarded *élève* and friend General De la Warr.

"I have pleasing news for my fair friends," said Mr. Stanhope, soon after the termination of dinner had dismissed Mr. Watts and his auxiliaries from attendance: "I have received a letter this day from our dear general, and you

may very reasonably hope soon to hear of his arrival in a better country than the one he has been visiting."

This exordium was soon followed by opening the pleasing page of actual arrival at Portsmouth.

"But not alone," said Mrs. Manners, anxiously, as she mentally ejaculated her thanksgiving for a beloved brother's safety.

"Yes, alone, I grieve to say, my dear madam," responded Mr. Stanhope; "but I know nothing yet of the particulars of our dear general's disappointment; yet, with his accustomed kindness to his friends, he cheers me by saying, he still cherishes hope. However, I purpose to hear all he builds his further expectation on ere I am many hours older; and intend to take wing from this hospitable roof for Portsmouth, where the general fears he may be delayed some time by the indisposition of his poor Norman, who was taken ill at sea; and we know nothing short of compulsion would induce the general to leave this old faithful servant to the care of strangers."

"This is very unfortunate, after all my poor brother's disappointments and fatigues," said Mrs. Manners. "I feel so very anxious to see my beloved Augustus, and to be of comfort to him, that if you have no objection to a female companion in your chaise, Mr. Stanhope, I will accompany you."

On the following morning, accordingly, our travellers set out from Rosindale Cottage for Portsmouth; and shortly after their departure, Olivia, addressing Mrs. Brudenel, said, "Of course, Alethea, we are not to go to this aforesaid ball of Lady Lancefield's, having lost our dear *chaperon*."

"You forget that I can be useful that way," replied Mrs. Brudenel, sighing; "and I am to have the honour of appearing for the first time under the character of *chaperon*, to attend you to-morrow evening at Rosindale Park; for my mother's last injunctions were, 'that we should attend this *fête*, and conduct ourselves there with the most conciliating propriety, for the benefit of our dear uncle's electioneering interest; and also to evince grati-

tude for some important favour conferred upon my dear father by the last possessor of Rosindale Park."

"I should like exceedingly to attend this ball," said Olivia, "were I certain of two matters; one, that the mischievous imps, who sometimes possess me, might not overthrow the propriety of my deportment through the evening; the other, the absence of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke."

"But why wish for the absence of such an ornament to society? Am I to believe you sincere in this, Olivia?"

"My dear Alethea, from all you confided to me yesterday relative to this man, I find I may be ingenuous with you, and I will be so. Although love never existed between us, at least love-making, I verily believe we were both on the actual brink of the precipice, from which my egregious fooleries pushed us humanely back. Now, of course, both are heart-whole and sound again; yet, from consciousness of former peril and escape, we may look and feel a little awkward at first meeting, and

my anticipation of such sort of sensation has not a little annoyed me; added to which annoyance, is my being wholly inadequate to determine how I ought to meet the man. In our last interview we were the most amicable allies, when high presto! my active imps performed their gambols, and he absconded from my side, just for the pleasant purpose of beaming that already-mentioned farewell glance at me.

"And now I earnestly wish, my dear Alethea," continued Olivia, "that you would allow your superior prudence and judgment to instruct me in my mode of deportment. It strikes me, that were I to meet my *ci-devant* Mentor in the armour of stately reserve, it would appear as if I were mortified at his unceremonious dereliction; and on the contrary, to meet him with cordiality, or even *non-chalance*, would seem as if I possessed no particle of grace, as if I were not ashamed of the degrading encouragement I had given to the addresses of a profligate."

"I do wish you had asked this advice from

my mother," replied Mrs. Brudenel; " but were I to advise, it would be, to observe the tone of his aspect in the moment of your meeting, and allow that to guide your manners into unison with his."

" My dear Alethea, I could as soon voluntarily encounter the solitary eye of the monster Polyphemus, as the penetrating look of this neighbour of ours; for if he were to favour me with another of his ungracious glances, I am certain I should scamper back to the protection of the seneschal of our cottage."

" Well then," returned Mrs. Brudenel, smiling, " I must reconnoitre for you, and give you your cue by some preconcerted signal."

" Ten thousand thanks, my kind coz! yet, even with this kindness of yours, I know quite well I shall be too humble, or too proud; too grave, or too gay. The deuce take that odious adverb *too*. It always mars my path to perfection; I never attempt any thing promising, that the ugly insignificant impedier does not start up in my way."

CHAPTER X.

At length the hour arrived for the two fair inhabitants of Rosindale Cottage to set out for the ball. The shade thrown by her sable dress over the fine form of Mrs. Brudenel allowed not its exquisite perfection, striking every beholder with the full force of admiration, as it otherwise must have done : but the conspicuous beauty of her face was unimpeded, even by the pensiveness that was now its touching character of expression ; and Olivia beheld her — without envy beheld her — as one to whom, even vanity whispered, the palm must be adjudged from every competitor.

Miss De la Warr was attired by the hand of taste and elegance, from the stores of affluence and fashion. Her form was the perfection of symmetry and grace, and nothing was left unaccomplished to show that off to every advantage which innate delicacy could sanc-

tion; yet, Mrs. Brudenel was dissatisfied with the appearance of her cousin, whom she had never seen look less strikingly beautiful; for there was a restless agitated expression in her countenance, a something operating within, that chased her own delicately brilliant bloom, blanching one cheek and giving the deep flush of perturbation to the other: a something, that had despoiled her eyes of their dazzling radiance, and her mouth of its enchanting smiles.

Scarcely were they seated in the carriage on their way to Rosindale Park, when Olivia said: —

“ Alethea, I am miserable at obeying my aunt’s commands to attend this ball; since, knowing her wishes upon a certain subject, my heart accuses me of not having been so explicit upon that subject to her as I have been to you; and that — in short, I cannot express how culpable I feel myself in going to Lady Lancefield’s. It seems to imply a reprehensible expectation in me, of subverting my aunt’s wishes relative to Sir Frederick.”

"Compose your conscience to rest, my dear Olivia," replied Mrs. Brudenel; "and be assured, you did the mischief of subverting the wishes of my mother long before they were formed. And leaving my helping hand to such subversion wholly out of the question, I told mamma, the evening before she left us, that my determination against a second marriage would never be vanquished by Sir Frederick Bolingbroke; since in my short conference with him, relative to my cousin, I found conviction that Olivia De la Warr would become the idol of his homage, the moment the prejudices he had imbibed against her were removed; and that he would then only be withheld from offering her himself by the limited state of his income."

"And after this, Alethea, tell me candidly; tell me truly; did my aunt, did your mother, repeat her mandate for my attending this ball?" said Olivia, in the tones of powerful agitation.

"On my solemn word, she did repeat it, after my communications; and further added,

‘ We must remove these prejudices from Sir Frederick’s mind ; for he is, of all men living, the one most calculated to wean Olivia’s mind from all the thoughtlessness imbibed from precept and example, and to transform her into all that is estimable in a wife ; and since the first wish of my heart cannot be realized, relative to your restoration to happiness through this means, my beloved child, I will do my utmost to accomplish my second, by securing that of Olivia, through her union with this most estimable man.’ ”

“ My kind aunt !” escaped, in low and tremulous tones, from the coral lips of Olivia ; but, she added no more ; excess of feeling overpowered articulation ; and, silent in deep thought, she, with her fair cousin, performed the remainder of the short way to Rosindale Park.

The road from the cottage to the mansion of Rosindale was up a steep winding hill ; so that the domain which the brave serjeant now possessed did not appear to the lovely cousins until they arrived at the lodges to the grand

entrance, which now presented a superb spectacle of magnificent illuminations, continued, with much taste and expense, along the extensive avenue which formed the road to the superbly illuminated mansion.

"Bless me! the man has been a gas-light manufacturer, or a firework-maker, in his obscurity," exclaimed a conspicuously fine lady, who alighted from her carriage and entered the vestibule before the fair cousins of the cottage.

"No, not so bad as that," exclaimed this lady's female companion; "the law may claim him, for he was a prime serjeant — to his regiment."

"Oh, capital! capital! vastly well indeed!" rejoined the first speaker; "but you are such a witty *esprit*, Henny!"

"How vexatious!" whispered Olivia to Alethea.

"My oldest friend — my newest foe —
The dagger-witted Henny, O!"

At this moment the witty *esprit*, in the form of Miss Henrietta Daggerly, turned her prominent eyes in full stare on Olivia, who made a grave but courteous bow, *en passant*, to her *ci-devant* friend; who returned the civil recognition by an insolent toss of her head, as she rudely exclaimed to her companion:—

“So, *that* Olivia De la Warr is here, and your curiosity to see that self-dubbed beauty may now be gratified.”

“Heavens!” exclaimed Mrs. Brudenel, alarmed, through her life of sequestration, “since she is at this open warfare with you, it would have been well had my mother or uncle been here, to yield us protection from hostility.”

“Protection!” repeated a gentle mellifluous voice behind Mrs. Brudenel; “protection Mrs. Brudenel can be at no loss to find, whilst she has an old friend so near.”

“Oh, Sir Frederick!” said Alethea, with one of her sweetly serious smiles, “I think I may well supplicate for protection, when de-

monstration has been given me of a female savage having gained admittance."

The fair lady thus characterized by the gentle Alethea now darted forward with her friend through the grand hall of the mansion, to escape any further observation on the part of Sir Frederick, who had just arrived with his friends Nettlethorp and Marchmont, in Sir Cornelius Lancefield's coach, which with due respect had been sent with the *attelage* of four horses for their honours. Alethea continued:—

"I really began to fear some manual hostility was meditated against my unoffending cousin, whom you already know, I think; if not, allow me to introduce you to Miss De la Warr."

"I had the honour of that introduction some time since," replied Sir Frederick, blushing deeply, as he bowed to Olivia with an extended hand of tremulous amity; "but, it is with surprise I reclaim my old acquaintance by any appellation but that of Lady Headland."

Olivia also blushed brightly, as she, too, held out an unsteady hand in amity ; and as she did so, raised her eyes, illumined by such a radiant light of mental intelligence, that Alethea was satisfied ; for she felt convinced, that nothing wearing mortal mould could look more lovely, more ingenuous, as she spoke with that touching subjugation of voice which proved the better feelings of her mind were deeply mortified.

“ You cannot be more surprised at again meeting Olivia De la Warr, than Olivia De la Warr is, on finding Sir Frederick Bolingbroke could so long treasure in his remembrance the degrading follies of an old friend.”

Sir Frederick, not prepared for such an ingenuous acknowledgement of her fault, delivered with such affecting sweetness, was agitated out of all self-possession ; which the kind and penetrating Alethea perceiving, removed his embarrassment, and recalled him to himself by desiring an introduction to his friends.

This presentation having taken place, the

thus augmented party proceeded onward to the grand suite of apartments, superbly arranged by artists of evident taste from London; and the fair cousins appearing thus under escort of a detachment of their honours, and being also kinswomen to the general, under whose immediate command Sir Cornelius had chiefly performed his campaigns, ensured for them a conspicuous portion of attention and respect from the warm-hearted though unrefined master and mistress of the superb mansion.

They were, therefore, received with a succession of profound obeisances by Sir Cornelius, who accompanied each bow with the *en militaire* manual homage of touching his forehead, where the cap or helmet had long sat for the day's fixture; and by his magnificently dressed lady, with as many profound courtesies; after an honest disbanded corporal of their late corps, who had been their principal waiter in their sutting concern, now exalted to the rank of butler, proclaimed the respective style of the party with audible precision, thus : —

“ The lady of Major Brudenel, deceased; the niece of Lieutenant-General De la Warr, absent upon leave; Lieutenant Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, baronet; Lieutenant Nettlethorp, gentleman; and Ensign Marchmont, gentleman; my lady !”

Lady Lancefield now took a hand of each of the fair cousins, and led them, attended by a scarcely suppressed smile playing on the lips of the few assembled guests, to the place which she considered of the highest honour in the apartment ; and having there seated the beautiful objects of her conspicuous homage, she remained to do them further honour by her conversation.

“ I hopes, young ladies,” she audibly said, “ that you will perceive nothing as is defensive from the gash-lights, nor from the house being shut up so long in mourning for the missing owner. Indeed, I was so poisoned by the gash, and the musty ordure, that fearing them there bouquets and plants from the hot-houses would scarce be powerful enough to wanquish the nuisance, *sur ma vie*; but, before I went

up to my dressing-room to clean myself, for the honour of receiving you, I burnt a matter of six score of the most powerfulest pestilentials that money could purchase of the Civil-cat, (Civet,) in Bond-street; and threw the scragments into the fire to putrify the air."

Mrs. Brudenel bowed her courtesy with sweet urbanity, but silent melancholy gravity; which the painful conflict, the proclaiming her style so unexpectedly had awakened; whilst Olivia, also, bowed and smiled, but dared not venture on the betraying hazard of uttering a reply; while, luckily for the rebellious symptoms arising in her risible faculties, Lady Lancefield was summoned away the moment she had completed her speech, to receive a new party, by the audible outcry of the roll-calling corporal, who solemnly announced the arrival of —

" Squire, Mrs., and two Misses Whiffen-shank, my lady!"

Lady Lancefield's civilities were soon paid to the party, having no military attraction about them; and she rapidly returned to the nieces

of General De la Warr, to present to them her elder son, a very fine interesting young man of nineteen, who did not seem to commence his exaltation with any degree of rustic awkwardness ; but, certainly, with not more relish than the shrinkingly embarrassed Sir Cornelius himself.

“ My son of air, young ladies, begs for the honour of being presented to you. Come, Julius, speak up for yourself, *mon mignon*, and ask for the honour of dancing with one of them. You, my bashful chap, can be genteel; howsomever ; for you was not reared out of your speer. You knows, *mon ange*, you must first show your *politesse* to the married lady, and because as she is oldest, not *en verité* ; but, when the head of Mrs. Broodonale vags with age, Miss De la Warr’s may squake for fear.”

Mr. Lancefield; with a bright blush of ingenuous shame at his mother’s glaring deficiency, and at his own presumption — which he could not persuade himself to think it was not — in requesting the honour of dancing with

Mrs. Brudenel, made his request in so low a tone, that had not Lady Lancefield anticipated the petition, Alethea could scarcely have made out what she was under the necessity of declining.

His second effort at performing the honours of the house was more audible through practice; and Olivia made both him and his fond mother happy, by acceding with winning sweetness to his request, although she felt not a little sorrowful at Sir Frederick's not having forgotten her misdemeanour sufficiently to have anticipated the young heir.

"Of course you will dance, Lady Lancefield, and I hope confer upon me the honour of your hand," said Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, who had now approached the seats of honour.

"*Sur ma vie!* you must excuse my opening the ball with your honour," replied the gratified and grateful Deb; "for to tell you the truth, your honour, I cannot forget past times, and sit like a lazy wench nailed to my chair, when there is work to be done. So, *en*

bonne foi, I have been running after the tradesfolks since sunrise, to see as they did their duty, and to help them a bit; so that, *croyez moi sur ma parole*, I can scarce vag, or I should have been proud in the high honour intended me by you, Sir Frederick, dear young *gentilhomme*. And I could caper with the best on them, having been learned at Paris."

" Well, then," said Sir Frederick, " since I am not to have the pleasure of dancing with you, allow me another honour, Lady Lancefield ; that of your being my *cicerone* through the saloon ;" and Sir Frederick kindly drew her into a private conference, to impart a little necessary instruction upon the requisite forms to be observed towards her guests, particularly in precedence, which demanded that not Miss De la Warr, but a young Marchioness, who had signified her intention of dancing, should open the ball, since the lady of the mansion declined it.

This kindness in Sir Frederick, the natural good sense of Lady Lancefield taught her

fully how to appreciate ; although that part of it she could by no means relish, which was to transfer precedence to any one from the nieces of General De la Warr.

From this friendly conference, Lady Lancefield was summoned by the announcing Corporal, who proclaimed with emphasis :

“ Major General Sir Hector Valiant, Knight Companion of the Bath, and Pay Master Bullion Goldby ; my lady !”

“ *Morbleu !* ” exclaimed Marchmont to Nettlethorp. “ Bastion’s memory is at last at fault. He omitted, ‘ from half-pay without purchase ;’ so the gazette ran ; I saw it with my own eyes, sir—I must prompt him for the loved memory of our defunct corps.”

In a moment more, Corporal Bastion proclaimed :

“ My Lord, and my Lady,—no. The Earl and Countess of Aldwinkle, and my Lady Anne, and my Lady Christina—no, Christian—yes ; no—Christianna Dorville—my lady !”

The risibility of the witty *esprit* Henny,

and her companion Mrs. Titterton, now became uncontrollable ; their satirical propensities were completely aroused, and having no parliamentary interest at stake, they, after a few moments' struggle, sent their laughter to emanate only from their eyes ; and demurely advancing to Lady Lancefield, requested her explanation of the devices represented on some *bas relief* in the room.

" *Parbleu!* " exclaimed Lady Lancefield— " I knows no more, my lasses, than the evening gun, of the geneology of one of them reliefs."

" Perhaps," cried Miss Daggerly, " you can explain the *geneological* representation upon this beautiful vase, which it would be a vast pity, were your evening or morning gun to pop at."

" Oh! as to that there, it is gun-proof ; for it is set down in a libel on its base, as I saw this morning when I took it down to clean—that this wase had been taken by the fifteenth sentry, at the famous battle of Armada."

" Oh—h! — taken in the Spanish Armada,

in the fifteenth century ! Thank you, ma'am, for your most correct information," said Mrs. Titterton — " but pray, may I ask you, Lady Lancefield, where you were so pre-eminently fortunate, as to procure the delightful martial band, which is performing so divinely in your hall?"

" That was the band of the second battalion of our regiment, now disbanded ; and if there was any thing to be got on these here occasions, Sir Curnailus and I thought it but right to put it into the empty pockets of our old comrades," said this friendly unaffected woman, whom fortune had thus exalted.

" Indeed !" responded Mrs. Titterton, with what she conceived humorous gravity — " I did not know that Sir Cur-nail-us had been in the army, whilst alienated from the succession."

" *Parbleu !* nor I, *sur ma vie !*" exclaimed the witty Henny, achieving the most comic aspect of gravity and amaze her *bel esprit* could assume ; and never weary of one *bon mot* until she had manufactured another ;

"I thought, *pardi!* [with an imitative shrug of her shoulders] as how Sir Cur-nail-us had been bred to that there dry stuff, the law; and that he had been actually Prime Serjeant."

"He was a prime serjeant, *en vérité*, miss," returned Lady Lancefield, who, however deficient in information and refinement, possessed full as much wit as the witty *esprit* herself, "when at the battle of battles, on the plane of Waterloo, he killed with his own valiant hand the bearer of one of the enemy's eagles, and placed it on the colours of his own gallant regiment. *Par ma foi*, but he was a *prime*, and load, and fire-away serjeant, that glorious day, when he snatched up the musket of a brave private, to avenge the slaughter of his comrades, and fight for the fearful balance of victory. But we have had a law-serjeant, in Sir *Cor-ne-lius* Lancefield's family, miss; one, whose picture I can have the honour of showing you, in his vermin robes; one, as sat judge on the bench, on the circus, when one of your aunt'sisters [ancestors] was condemned

for — *il ne faut pas réveiller le chat qui dort.* Yet that, I takes it, miss, was the prime serjeant as runs in your head; and *sur ma vie*, with reason."

The witty Miss Daggerly, as many a wit before her has experienced, when allowing that dangerous talent to wound the feelings of others, was now completely discomfited ; but Mrs. Titterton not having yet received her quietus, determined to give her wounded friend time to recover, now undauntedly said : —

" I conclude, Lady Lancefield, you purpose retaining this famous band in your service. It will have a monstrous grand effect, performing on the rocks, in responsive groups, when Rosindale becomes a fashionable bathing place, under your elegant auspices."

Lady Lancefield, who had keenly felt the impertinence of Miss Daggerly, ere she had been aroused to shoot her own barbed arrow, felt also that something of the same tendency was operating, in the manner of Mrs. Titterton

to her; she therefore did not say to her, as she would have answered almost any other individual present, who had started such a supposition: "That former familiarity might cause contempt, and that occasional employment was all that could be ventured upon judiciously:" she therefore replied — "We do not purpose having a constant band, madam, nor have I the vanity to set about making Rosindale the *woge* [vogue] through my all-spices [auspices], or any other culinary lure. My watering quarters, I purpose shall be Brighton, where I shall stand a chance to see our king: Heaven bless him! We means to have a willa at Brighton."

"A willow! Dear me! I really did not know that willows flourished at Brighton," exclaimed Mrs. Titterton, with so conspicuous a wink at her discomfited friend, that Lady Lancefield was aroused by it into full consciousness of the error in her language, which her son Julius had often and vainly pointed out to her; when promptly, though not without

a blush of some mortification and ire, she replied :

" Well, madam, if *villas* does not flourish at Brighton, villains sometimes does, as the gaming tables there, as I have lately heard, can testify."

Mrs. Titterton was now even more disconcerted than the *bel esprit* had been ; for this keen arrow of retaliation penetrated still nearer home.

Lady Lancefield was again called off by Corporal Bastion, to receive a party that now entered, as all their predecessors had done, to perceive a suppressed smile upon the lips of all surrounding them ; greatly to discompose their self-satisfaction, not having heard the novel mode of proclamation which had excited it ; and this had proved a peculiarly awkward nomination, the party being a young man just married to a rich old lady, and being accompanied thither by a young female cousin of the ancient bride, Bastion named them from appearance, not from his cue, delivered by the footman ; and audibly announced —

"Mrs. Wingold, and her son and daughter; my lady!"

After this bridal party, there was scarcely any other arrival, to the utter amazement of the hospitable lady of the mansion, who had issued cards for a very large assembly, and had made preparations accordingly; and vain was her wonder and chagrin at there having arrived comparatively so few, to follow up the flattering attention paid to Sir Cornelius and Lady Lancefield, on their taking possession of Rosindale Park. But poor Lady Lancefield was not aware of the provoking fact, until a gentleman late in the evening accounted to her for the absence of numbers, by informing her of a great portion of her "At Home," being dated for the thirty-first, whilst his own, and many others, were for the thirteenth, the present evening; the fact being, that poor Deb's knowledge in the science of arithmetic not being profound, when she filled up her printed cards, which unluckily had been done before the arrival of Mr. Lancefield from Oxford, she sometimes gave the 3 preced-

ence, sometimes the 1, in insertion; believing that, so the two numbers in demand were united, they would tend to the same point in identifying the day of her being "at home."

CHAPTER XI.

At length dancing commenced, after losing much time in striving to reconcile Sir Cornelius to the absolute necessity of giving the Marchioness of Alcester precedence of the niece of General De la Warr; and which had required all the eloquence of their honours to persuade him "that the niece of one of the brave warriors who had saved Europe from pillage and slavery, could in honour and conscience be called upon, or could be permitted in the house of any true hearted Englishman, to yield the place of superior respect to the wife of a man who had never faced a cannon ball, nor seen a shot fired in warfare!"

And now Miss Daggerly, perceiving that Olivia De la Warr was here, an object of higher splendour in the constellation of fashion than herself; and that therefore she had

materially erred in her conduct to this once nominally dear friend, whom she had for some months past denounced as her bitterest foe, in her fancied injury of having deprived her of a coronet; she now, depending upon Olivia's known sweet temper, and her own dexterity in management, flew up, with the easy confidence she was so famed for, to the unprepared Olivia, whose hands she seized, in apparent ecstasy, exclaiming: —

“ Ah! is it absolutely you, my dear friend, whom I treated so rudely in that dark vestibule? or, at least, where one's eyes were actually dazzled out of one's very head, by that volcanic blaze of opulence? *En vérité*, my memory was *gashed*, and I mistook you for that odious Olive D'—— la — I forgot her odious name; but she who was always leading mamma, and my sisters, and me, into annoying scrapes last winter, relative to you; the resemblance in name too, as well as aspect, being so preposterously posing; and I had heard the *fac-simile* animal was on a visit in this county; and that you were with the

adorable Townly in Paris. And besides, you look so much paler than you did in town; and, by the way, is this reduction of bloom caused by Lady Caroline announcing to you that *le blanc* is the style in Paris. At all events, it becomes you so uncommonly, that, *en vérité*, I did not recognise in you the full rose of the metropolis."

Olivia was at this moment in no spirits for repartee; for she saw Sir Frederick paying marked attention to a partner, to whom he had caused himself to be introduced, after an earnest gaze at her. She therefore received this address without any effort at repelling it; and thus, through mental abstraction, merely permitting this renewal of intimacy which the artful Henrietta chose to seize, as encouragement to former amity; and, to the utter amazement of Mrs. Brudenel, she beheld the savage who had alarmed her gentle bosom, adhering to the side of her pensive coz, who was silently taking her stand with the young heir of the mansion, amid the forming groups. " Dear me! who is that man, my dear

Olivia?" exclaimed Miss Daggerly, on perceiving Miss De la Warr return the bow of a young man who was in the act of handing a lady, advanced in life, to a seat: "that *petit maitre*, you have recognised?"

"That is Mr. Mason."

"Is he any body?"

"He is son to Lady Charlotte Mason, the lady whom he is conducting to a seat, ma'am."

"How abominably provoking! I did not approve the cast of his phiz — I took him for one of our host's drum-boys; so pleaded an engagement, when my Lady Slipslop brought him up to me for a partner. Really, people of rank ought to have faces to correspond with their station. I wish, my dear friend, you would tell him, 'that there existed a mistake relative to my engagement, and that I am ready to dance with him.'"

At this moment, Mr. Mason, with the sweetly conscious air of a self-convicted lady-killer, advanced to Olivia, exclaiming —

"Who could have thought of seeing Miss De la Warr so far from town? Lady Charlotte will not credit the phenomenon. She affirms, it is your ghost; and I affirm, it is *une âme*,

————— 'whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.'"

Miss Daggerly had by this time fluttered off showers of gold from her profusely spangled fan; and twisted her eyes into the menace of an irretrievable obliquity, in giving side-long glances of significant import to her she chose once more to claim as friend; and Olivia finding the moment approaching for her commencing her part in the quadrille, and anxious to disencumber herself of two personages she exceedingly disliked, made no comment on Mr. Mason's maltreatment of our immortal bard, in his effort to compliment; but hastily told to him "that Miss Daggerly was anxious to explain some untoward mistake, which had prevented their mutual happiness under the

banners of Terpsichore,' and turned from them both, to speak to her own unassuming partner; leaving Miss Daggerly to manufacture her own explanation; which so highly elated the vanity of the *petit maître*, who doubted not this smitten young lady having jilted some hapless wight, for the superior gratification of obtaining him for a partner, that he mercilessly determined to caper the fair *innamorata* out of every particle of heart, which his exterior had not already vanquished.

Olivia's address to her partner was something relative to a mistake of the commencing couples in the quadrille, which now retarded their proceeding. Mr. Lancefield attempted a reply; but the words seemed to die away in the very act of formation.

Miss De la Warr saw and pitied the poor young man's embarrassment. She felt that he was in a situation of peculiar awkwardness; and with a sweet encouraging smile of benevolence, she made some common-place remarks to him.

This most unexpected condescension, (for he

had heard with acute mortification the ridicule levelled by the witty friends at his beloved mother,) seemed to operate as a potent charm, which restored at once his powers of articulation ; but still accompanied by a beating heart, and tremulous accents, he requested Miss De la Warr to pardon him, should he commit error in the dance ; any solecism in conversation ; any negligence or impropriety in politeness or attention.

" For," he added with still greater agitation—" I feel the awkwardness of my situation very sensibly. I resemble a savage, drawn at once from his uncouth pursuits into civilized society ; and I can scarcely persuade myself that the extraordinary change is not delusion. Reared with the humblest classes, and in respectful deference to all above me, I shrink like some abject, some consciously unworthy being, now I am called into association with them, and am in momentary peril of saying and doing all things, to betray the station I have been called from. And you can scarcely conceive the effect it has on my amazed

senses — that I, who never approached a female in more exalted life than the wife of the very humble schoolmaster by whom I was reared, should all at once, as if through the magic of a dream, be permitted the honour of dancing with Miss De la Warr."

"You must consider yourself Prince le Boo, just entering upon the wonders of a new world," said Olivia, with another sweet smile of benevolent sympathy, excited by this young man's strong sensibility of the embarrassments of his situation. "But, were it not deemed reprehensible to mention aught like censure of the departed, I might be tempted to say, 'had all the ancestors of Sir Cornelius Lancefield performed their orbit in their appropriate sphere, Prince le Boo would now feel himself quite at home in this hereditary mansion.'"

"True, Miss De la Warr," replied Mr. Lancefield, with a burst of natural animation, looking with filial tenderness upon his mother, then passing near him; "but then my father would have married in his proper sphere;

and I should have lost the blessing of such a mother as mine has proved."

Olivia was amazed and affected, and now looked with respect and reverence, as well as pity, upon this young man; whom she pronounced one of those favourites of Nature, whose exalted mind would have burst through every garb, in which fate might have endeavoured to disguise it.

"Oh!" continued Mr. Lancefield, "can I ever forget how she toiled; how she exerted every nerve to bestow upon me something of education; and above all, to preserve my morals from contagion! And I, who know her heart to be the richest treasure in the possession of her family, am tempted to wish this change of situation had not fallen upon us, when I have the pain to see her the scoff of those who have not half her goodness."

The quadrille had now proceeded, which the capricious fancies of the Marchioness of Alcester and Lady Christians Dorville had so long retarded; and Olivia De la Warr

commenced her part in it, under a sudden suspicion of her partner being the identical poet, whom she had heard much celebrated, as the son of a serjeant in her uncle's regiment. Olivia was right in her conjecture; and it was through his early uninstructed muse finding flattering commendation from those whom she considered competent judges, which had led his mother to the laudable, and in the result, most fortunate exertion she had made for educating this obscure but promising scion of genius.

When the quadrille was drawing near its termination, Julius Lancefield, inspired by the condescending sweetness of his lovely partner, absolutely summoned up courage to solicit the honour of her hand for the quadrille after the succeeding one; a request, which she without reluctance acceded to; as hope beamed in her bosom, with the expectation of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke's surely selecting her as his partner for the intervening one. But this hope deceived her; Sir Frederick saw and felt her enchantments too potently, to dare an

approach within their resistless influence ; now he beheld her former wild vivacity chastened into fascination, which he dreaded whilst doubtful of the intrinsic worth of her heart, and certain of the suspended state of his own revenue.

Mr. Lancefield having found an opportunity of whispering to his mother, as she had passed near the *corps du ballet*, “ that his lovely partner was an angel in condescending sweetness ;” and her second boy Daniel having been teasing her “ to get the beautifullest lass in the room to dance with him, as Will Bird, the first horn player, had assured him Miss De la Warr was the prime of all who had passed through the hall ;” Deb soon destroyed poor Olivia’s fondly cherished expectations for the second quadrille, by engaging her for Daniel ; the darling of his father, who had, therefore detained him longer with the regiment than his anxious mother approved ; and consequently he was as far inferior to his naturally refined brother in manner, as he was in genius. Yet, although his appearance at

church did not call forth the admiration of Olivia De la Warr, he was a rather handsome spirited youth, ripe for all the dissipation, riches, and his father's indulgence, might lead him into.

Mr. Daniel Lancefield had acquired his accomplishment of dancing in Paris ; he could perform all the evolutions of the art with neat precision, animated agility, and even striking grace, which astonished the beholder ; but Daniel had not learned to stand still in Paris, and therefore, when he ceased from dancing action, he stood first for a second upon one foot, then upon the other, next upon both, then upon the outside, and next upon the inside edge of each, as if seeking for the firmest footing of fashion. Then his eyes, in no adventurous flight, could descry any station for a home one ; whilst his roving hands, on which he seemed to display more thumbs than usually fall to the share of man, sought in vain a comfortable spot of refuge in every pocket about him, fully determined they should not stray into that position which might betray

his having been under the tuition of his father, a celebrated drill artist ; and the poor youth's consciousness of this awkward restlessness but increased its visibility. However, although thus aware of a thousand deficiencies, he possessed not his brother's interesting diffidence ; and perfectly assured, as Will Bird, his long established oracle, had told him so, "that gold would purchase every species of indulgence," he had announced to his adoring father that day, that "he was determined to pluck up spunk, and go slap at once into every thing dashing ; since practice alone could make folks perfect."

His first slap-dash being to secure the beauty of the ball for a partner, his next was, to talk to her without any impeding diffidence, in what he thought must be fashionable lingo : he therefore rapidly commenced with :—

"Are you a famous whip, miss?"

Olivia, although but one moment before ready to burst into tears through vexation, on being compelled, by her engagement to this boy, to decline dancing with Marchmont, from

whom she might have had a chance of hearing something of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, now scarcely could resist a burst of risibility ; but her uncle's electioneering interest, and her own interest for the feelings of her partner's brother, restrained her ; and with a good-natured smile, she replied : —

“ Not very celebrated ; for I have to confess, that I have no present recollection of ever having had even a whip in my hand.”

Daniel now felt wofully disappointed ; he had meant to have launched forth with her upon a wide extended field of conversation, “ in his beautiful pheaton, all glittering with warnish !” had she possessed any science in such matters. However, as that field seemed closed against him, he darted across the British ocean to another, and demanded : —

“ Pray, have you been to Waterloo, miss ? ”

But ere Olivia could articulate her negative to this also, Daniel felt disconcerted, bethinking himself, ‘ that question smelt strikingly of the shop ; ’ and what turn to give it, for recti-

fying the unlucky allusion, he knew not; but in the height of his dilemma, their duty in the quadrille called them both into action, and their conversation for that period was suspended.

When opportunity next occurred for its renewal, Daniel was fully prepared with a question, judiciously arranged, to prevent annoying retrospection.

"Pray, miss, have you heard lately of any murders?"

"No, thank Heaven!" responded Olivia, now almost tempted to intimate to him the improvement it would afford to his style by adding her paternal name when he addressed her by her spinster appellative.

"Oh, well then, miss," replied Daniel, with a significant nod of his head, "we soon shall hear of plenty."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Olivia. "But may I ask, how you came to be in this sanguinary secret? Are we all to be assassinated on our route home?"

"Oh, wait! you will see! But it is self-

murders I expects ; for you can return the love of but one sweetheart, miss ; and a pretty many we shall have shoe-insiding themselves in despair."

Olivia's risibility was now uncontrollable, as she demanded, " how he could think of imputing to her alone the crime of manslaughter, where he perceived she must have so many accomplices ?"

" Because," he replied, " you are the most perfectest beauty in the whole room. Why, bless you, Will Bird swears there is not another on them fit to wipe your shoes, miss, nor to hold a candle to you whilst they wipe them."

" And pray, who is Will Bird ?" demanded Olivia, with a smile and a blush. " An artist, I presume, by your placing implicit confidence in his taste and judgment ?"

" Oh, he is a paticlar of mine, miss. One of those little birds, of which mayhap you have heard, as whispers things to certain folks," returned Daniel, as he blushed, through having escaped the blunder of acknowledging the station of his friend, which he very nearly had

committed. “ And if not what you takes him for, he has made as much noise in the world as most folks.”

“ Well, then,” replied Olivia, “ when next this little bird of yours comes to whisper his delusions in your ear, tell him to observe Mrs. Brudenel, and there he will behold perfect beauty.”

“ She is perfect enough, *en conscience*; but, by the bugles! not a patch upon your perfections, miss. Those as runs may see the rosebud’s beauty; whilst one must halt, and stoop, and gape, and stare, before one spies out that of the snowdrop.”

“ What do you think of that lady’s beauty?” demanded Olivia, directing his attention to the one whom Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, after a distant scrutiny, had distinguished.

“ Whew! she! She is but a wizzen concern when you comes nigh her. By the bugles! I believes Sir Frederick Bolingbroke repented his bargain, for the whole nation time he was footing it with her, my eye! but he was glining after my brother Julius’s partner, at a

precious rate. Mayhap you do not know which is Sir Frederick Bolingbroke. He was in our regiment, a—a—a brother soldier of Sir Curnelus's. There he is in the next brigade, capering away with that Lady Christiana, who does not think small-beer of herself. No, by the bugles ! Burgundy's the go in her opinion. See ! see ! how she flounders and flourishes about with her back bared, for all the world as if ready for the halberts. My eye ! how neatly Rawbone and Weal, our old drum-boys, would lay the cat-o'-nine-tails there, and by goles ! make the back blush to a higher glow of ruddle for its disposure, and coil it into more ruts and puckers than it has got already. Ay, surelie ! the cat-o'-nine-tails would make her pay the smart for enlisting under the banners of such in _____”.

Daniel had found his oral faculties flowing so fluently with her, who was so occupied by the glad tidings of Sir Frederick's having bestowed such marked attention upon her, that he wholly forgot how he was committing himself, until the second introduction of the cat-o'-

nine-tails aroused his recollection ; when suddenly, and adroitly, he turned attention from his blunder, by exclaiming —

“ See there ! how I told you, miss, the way Sir Frederick was glining after other folks’ partners. By the bugles ! but he has put them all into confusion, staring after you, miss. Whew ! row-de-do-dow ! what a proper skirmish he has kicked up, *pardi* !”

Olivia had herself observed the confusion occasioned in the next quadrille through the abstraction of Sir Frederick in a, to her, most gratifying employment; and agitated by pleased emotion, which she feared was about to subdue her, she requested one of the passing attendants to bring her a glass of water; but when the man quickly obeyed, Sir Cornelius himself rushed up to her, with a countenance of dismay, to seize the forbidden beverage.

“ Odds my life !” he cried, “ no water-drinking in any house of mine. Nobody shall be chilled to death beneath any roof of mine. No deaths by water in Rosindale Park. Name but the liquor you wish for, young lady,

and be it distilled from gold or rubies, the niece of my brave general shall have it."

Olivia now gracefully relinquished the interdicted beverage, as the indisposition she had feared had quite subsided; but Sir Cornelius being by no means satisfied at her having been "balked of her draught," she was compelled to promise taking wine with him at supper, ere she could relieve herself from his hospitable importunities; but still he sought out the kind-hearted partner of his fortunes, to desire her to see after Miss De la Warr, "who had been so desperate poorly as to call for cold water;" when away fled the good-natured and active Deb to inquire all about it; in doing which, she attracted the attention of Sir Frederick, who, in defiance of Dame Prudence, and all her wise remonstrances, flew to Olivia, and in tones of deep interest inquired —

"If she were not well?"

"Perfectly well," Olivia replied, now blushing to the brightest tint of the camelia japonica, which formed her chaplet, and with a voice so tremulous, that Sir Frederick, con-

vinced she was really not well, flew for Mrs. Brudenel to persuade her lovely coz that she was indisposed.

"Indeed, my dear Alethea, there is nothing the matter with me now," said Olivia, with a voice so agitated, that Sir Frederick snatched her hand with his tremulous one, and the quadrille having just terminated, declared she must positively go into a cooler room to recover from her too evident indisposition.

Thus forced upon the invalid list, Olivia was hurried by her anxious friends from the ball-room into the *consolatory*, as Lady Lancefield termed her beautiful conservatory; and never was spot more appropriately named at that moment, for the tender solicitude evinced by Sir Frederick for Olivia consoled her at once for all the disquietude she had experienced upon his apparent dereliction, and at once illumined her eloquent countenance, (fascinating, when animated,) to radiance of beauty Alethea had never before beheld in her: and so powerfully Sir Frederick felt its magic, that every recollection of his present impoverished

situation, every suspicion of her insidiousness, seemed at once to fly from his remembrance. He sat by her and gazed, and listened to the short sentences she uttered in grateful assurances to her anxious friends, that she was perfectly convalescent, until all things, but Olivia De la Warr, had flitted from his memory.

"But still you had better not recommence dancing to night," said Mrs. Brudenel, "although I see, with pleasure, you are recovered."

"Indeed, Alethea, but I must recommence the pastime of the evening," replied Olivia; "since I am engaged for the next quadrille to Mr. Lancefield, and the succeeding one to Sir Frederick's melodious friend."

"Why, you abound in engagements, my fair coz," said Alethea, with one of her sweetly plaintive smiles.

"Indeed do I," replied Olivia; "and one I have formed for to-night, of so convivial a nature, I think it must surprise you. What say you to an engagement for drinking cham-

paign with a gentleman at supper, even with Sir Cornelius Lancefield?"

Sir Frederick felt amazement at how the unassuming *ci-devant* serjeant could have found courage for drawing Miss De la Warr into such an engagement; but relative to the other engagements he felt highly disconcerted, as they inflicted disappointment upon himself; and this feeling of chagrin, by interrupting the sweet visions that were stealing through his mind, introduced other feelings to wound his heart. The voice of prudence became loud in reminding him of his situation, and that he ought to shun, not seek, the magic circle of Olivia's fascination.

CHAPTER XII.

AT length a new quadrille was forming, and Mr. Lancefield came anxiously to seek Olivia, who, accompanied by Mrs. Brudenel, quitted the conservatory for the ball-room ; leaving Sir Frederick absorbed in all the misery which the sudden paroxysm of prudence had inspired, and where he remained until disturbed by some flirting parties, from whom he fled to the side of Alethea, to whom he felt he had not, through the evening, paid that sufficient attention which long friendship with her family, and their first encounter at Rosindale Park, had certainly called for.

The set, in which Olivia now was dancing, was that near the spot where her fair cousin had stationed herself, not only to observe any possible symptom of returning indisposition, but to behold the performance of Olivia, who

was considered to have arrived at pre-eminence in the art of dancing.

Scarcely had Sir Frederick placed himself by the beautiful widow, ere Lady Lancefield requested permission for the honour of taking a seat beside Mrs. Brudenel.

"For, madam," she said, "I am quite anxious to see my son of air dance. I knows he does not excel like his beautiful partner, nor even like his brother; for Julus, bless the dear face on him! was not learned in Paris like Danel, and more's the pity! *Sur ma vie!* it is not too late yet. Howsomedevour, Julus has a fine compacity and a beautiful heart, and those are of more waluer; and when he has been a term or two at the college of Oxford as a master instead of a servitor, and been to the grand tower, and with us to France and Itly, he will be a partner worth dancing with. Not, indeed, that Miss De la Warr, bless her sweet face for a *mignonne!* tossed her beautiful nose at Julus, for she has been quite condescendentious and sociable, and no more

pride in her than in the black of my nail, and signs by it; the *garçon* says, ‘as he never was more comfortable in his life than when chatting with her.’ You will please to excuse a fond mother, Mrs. Broodonale, but, *sur ma vie!* it strikes me all on a heap, that *mon mignon* Julius and Miss De la Warr, *que'lle est belle lotte!* (with a shrug of her shoulders), are mortal like each other, just about the eyes, and the shape of the nose, and the mouth — *mon Dieu!* And the smile exact, and the silkiness of the hair, thoft one is chesnut, the other auburn. *Ah, pardi! pardi!* I shall love her all my life for this skimmilkitude [similitude] as I do my vitals.”

Sir Frederick was wound up by this time into absolute anger. He saw that Julius Lancefield was infinitely too handsome and too interesting for him to hear, with indifference, that Olivia had been sweet and kind to him. He would not have wished her to be ungracious to him; but to have been so much the reverse as to render one of the most diffident of mortals “*comfortable*,” even in a

first conversation, was infinitely more than his heart could *comfortably* endure. But when Lady Lancefield came to discover a resemblance, he all at once transformed this handsome individual he had feared into the most odious animal in the assembly, and placed the adoring mother at the very pinnacle of the list of all presumptuous visionaries. But the close of her speech upon the subject, so indicative of the species of affection she was preparing for this semblance to her awkward booby of a son, led him to find the concealment of his feeling a painful restraint paid to courtesy; and it was with infinite delight he beheld the termination of the quadrille, and Miss De la Warr approach her cousin, when instantly he presented a seat to her between Mrs. Brudenel and himself; and in defiance of all the twitches of Dame Prudence to beware, he remained sentinel, to keep off the proximity of her dreaded resemblance.

“ You dance too much, infinitely, Miss De la Warr, after your recent indisposition,” said Sir Frederick, in a voice of melting interest.

"I wish Marchmont would relinquish his engagement with you. For my own part, although panting for the honour of once more dancing with my old friend, I forego my entreaty for that happiness, in apprehension of the alarming effect it might have upon you."

"Humph!" thought the blushing Olivia, "not half so alarming an effect, I could tell you, my good friend, as this melting interest about my health."

Mr. Lancefield now conducted a servant to Olivia and her party with refreshments. Olivia took a glass of ice.

"You must sup that up unbeknown to my master, to Sir Curnailus I mean, Miss De la Warr," said Lady Lancefield; "for no beast in his hide-afore-you [hydrophobia] could have been in a stronger combustion, *sur ma vie!* at water, than he was alarmed for your drinking that there glass as you scared him with the sight on; and were he to spy you lapping up cold ice after dancing, *parbleu!* but the poor man would be in a fine panegyric."

"No, my dear mother," said Mr. Lance-

field, blushing and faltering, yet inspired with courage actually to speak before Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, to gloss over, if possible, these last glaring proofs of his beloved mother's ignorance; "I do not agree with you in thinking my father could be led by any means to bestow his panegyrics upon ice-creams; but I know you like it, mother. Permit me to hand you some."

"*Par ma foi!* I do like ice-creams purdibly," said Lady Lancefield; "the worst on it is, its making one's fingers clamorous."

"Our fingers are all clamorous to encircle another, and another glass of a delicious viand, when we can find it like this, most excellent;" said Sir Frederick, kindly volunteering in a solecism in language through pity for the filial mortification of the amiable young man, whom, but the moment before, he fancied he should joy to behold ridiculous in the eyes of Olivia De la Warr.

This benevolent kindness penetrated not more deeply into the mind of the grateful individual for whose sake it was practised,

than it did into the heart of Olivia, upon whose lips a smile of approbation played, which escaped not Sir Frederick, on whom its effect was to startle and displease.

"What!" thought he, "is it come to this? Is she pleased and grateful for kindness evinced to him?" and so unhinged and disconcerted he became at the circumstance, that when, in a few moments after, Marchmont came to claim the prize which all men coveted, he made not one remonstrance upon the subject of her dancing more. But when she became absolutely the partner of Marchmont—Marchmont, who he knew admired Mrs. Brudenel infinitely more than he admired her cousin, all his anxiety, all his interest for Olivia rekindled; and as she danced with his friend, he was the shadow of that friend, losing not one opportunity to let Olivia perceive he was near, ready to catch her silvery accents as they fell, and to give them, when possible, his gentle, prompt response.

At length the vociferous anxiety of Lady Lancefield for the accommodation of her

guests, whilst giving reiterated instructions to Corporal Bastion for opening the supper rooms, announced to Sir Frederick that the hour for the banquet was at hand ; and to secure his post near Miss De la Warr, he requested permission to be the escort of Mrs. Brudenel to the festive board, at which they were all in due time seated, to behold and partake of a banquet that could not have disgraced the hall of majesty.

The shrewd Deb, well aware of her own deficiencies, would not preside at any table, lest she might commit herself through names of dishes, and a variety of channels. She, therefore, judiciously walked about to see all her guests attended; and made the still less competent master of the revels perform the same pedestrian service, with his son Daniel as his cautious bottle-holder for prevention of too potent libation to the jovial god, in degradation of his present dignity.

This itinerant performance of the rites of hospitality allowed the house of Lancefield to make long pauses where they felt most un-

constrained ; and no spot did the whole firm seem to consider so attractive, as if in long habitual exercise—commencing with attention and ending with stand at ease—as where their honours and the nieces of their general were seated ; so that at various times the whole awkward squad of these recruits for fashionable life were found there, paying their profound respects, and more especially to Miss De la Warr, upon whom they had all fixed the eye of superlative admiration.

In one of these frequent pauses near our party, Sir Cornelius, with permission from Daniel, requested their honours to do him the honour of joining him in drinking health and happiness to their absent friends in Menroy Castle.

“ *Sur ma part de paradis !*” exclaimed Lady Lancefield, “ I have not yet conquered my vexation at my two handsomest *béaux* disappointing me--not, your honours, that I means, as you three are not handsome enough, *en conscience*; but in my rum way I means, that they are two proper Adroneasses as one

does not see every day ; and such a beautiful dancer, as even the French folks themselves said as Lieutenant Fauconberg is. It is monstrous aggravating their deserting their colours, *sur ma vie !* but it is. Howsomedevour, as I will not disappoint those as I led so illadvertently to expect the thirty-first to be my ball night, I shall have another *gala* on that *instant*. I means to put that word instant down on the cards, as I sees is done, to make folks punctual ; when I trust my *Adroneasses* will not on that day be absent without leave."

" Little does Lady Lancefield imagine that she may place the absence of her *Adroneasses* to your account, Miss De la Warr," said Marchmont, in a low voice, to Olivia.

" To mine !" repeated Olivia, in unfeigned surprise.

" 'Pon honour," returned Marchmont, " they both looked so piteously dismayed whilst I depicted for them the enchantments of a certain sorceress, whom I encountered at Rosindale Cottage on a certain day of transgression, that

I cannot but ascribe their present absence to alarm at the menaced witcheries of the said enchantress."

"Oh!" responded Olivia, smiling, "I have peeped into the process of spell-making there; and you may assure them from me, there is nothing formidable to apprehend in that quarter."

"I positively will not take upon myself the cruelty of luring them into peril, when I behold the effect of the magic in question upon some of this goodly company," returned Marchmont, archly glancing towards Sir Frederick; who, scarcely comfortable at beholding a blush on Olivia's cheek, mantled there by the whisper of Marchmont, resolved to disturb their converse, and hastily demanded:—

"If Miss De la Warr felt inclined to join the *corps du ballet*, which he understood was beginning to form its ranks once more in the ball-room?"

Olivia hesitated — "Not unless," she at length said, with a brilliant blush, "an old friend of mine will venture to undertake an

incorrigible coquette, and ask me to join that corps, for I know Mrs. Brudenel is anxious to go home."

"Then your old, your faithful friend will not undertake this formidable personage to-night," returned Sir Frederick; "but requests the coveted honour of joining the *corps du ballet* with her on the thirty-first."

Olivia was so overwhelmed with joy by the gentle accents in which this request was uttered, that she forgot the articulation of her acquiescence; and blushed so brightly, that Sir Frederick, in alarm, feared he had made a request which militated against some more favoured project.

"Then your old friend is not to be so honoured on the thirty-first?" he exclaimed, in a tone of despondence, which increased the heart-cherished rapture of Miss De la Warr; but, fearing to reply with any of that seriousness which marked his present manner, lest it might betray too much of the state of her feelings, she gaily replied:—

"So, my old friend, have I absolutely

caught you in the fact of an improved opinion of my stability? You think a promise of mine may now be relied on, in nineteen whole days after it is given. But, how may I be sure of your coming to claim me, my good sir? The last time we met, you made an engagement with me for Almack's; the ball-night came, and you had absconded. But now, as you are some months older, I trust I may expect more steadiness from you, more punctuality in fulfilling engagements; but, beware, if you break this one, I never will form another with such a celebrated deceiver."

At this moment the carriage of Mrs. Brudenel was announced; and, as soon as their parting ceremonies with the house of Lancefield permitted their effecting their departure, the fair cousins set out for Rosindale Cottage.

Scarcely were they seated in the carriage, when Mrs. Brudenel inquired "if Olivia believed in her predictions? If she were now convinced Sir Frederick Bolingbroke was her lover?"

"Why, I do really believe he has some-

thing of a tendency towards such a freak. His eyes, and his voice, certainly betrayed symptoms; and, when he relinquished my hand, upon my entering the carriage, he absolutely achieved a symptomatic pressure in farewell.

" But, for all this, Alethea, I suspect he means to be wary and wise; and to halt, stock still, at the verge of love's tremendous precipice; and there to stand, gazing alternately at me, at his suspended rent-roll, and at my roll of faults, so carefully registered in his retentive memory. If my faults raise the only barrier to his plunge down the precipice, why, I certainly can remove the impeding mass; but, if his empty coffers perform that service, why then he must stand fast in his forlorn hope; for I do not think my money-bags, well as they are filled, and the attractive acres they have to stand upon, would lure him down, he has so little of the mercenary in his composition. Heigh ho! must it at last come to the indecorum of my snatching him up on a palfrey, behind me, and flying down with him,

something in the arbitrary style of the bleeding nun with Alonzo the brave?"

"Nay," replied Alethea, "I think you may confidently look to the resistless power of love himself, impelling his wary votary down the precipice by his own invincible spells."

The gentle soothings of love's balmy solace, hope, beguiled Olivia of much of the short interval allowed by this night's revel for rest; yet she arose more brilliant in beauty the following morning than Alethea had ever before beheld her; and, attired by unstudied elegance, she took her station with her lovely cousin in the reception-room for morning visitors; fully assured many hours would not pass away ere she should again behold Sir Frederick Bolingbroke.

But the first visitors of the morning were the heir of Rosindale Park and his brother, who arrived with their mother's "At Home," for the thirty-first; and the younger brother being under the influence of the elder, during this visit, he did not betray any glaring breach in the forms of good breeding. But, he could

not conceal that his heart was wild with joy, and his head with project, for becoming a personage of much notoriety in the annals of *haut-ton*; and even from the pensive Alethea he elicited a smile, when he ingenuously confessed his awakening passion for the elegances and expenses of life; and how very easy he seemed to consider the task would prove, to transmute from the rough to the polished diamond.

On the other hand, the more intellectually gifted Julius, with equal ingenuousness, deplored his own deficiencies for an actor in superior life; and expressed his fears, that so late an attempted polish would only yield them the faint lustre of the artificial stone, not the true brilliancy of the genuine gem.

Scarcely had the brothers taken their leave, when Nettlethorp and Marchmont arrived at the cottage; and dismayed was the glance which Miss De la Warr shot from beneath the long silken fringe of her eyes into the ante-chamber, in search of Sir Frederick, when they entered, unaccompanied by him: but soon she

had the grief to learn that these gentlemen, who had arrived to pay their compliments, in consequence of their introduction the preceding night, were charged with the apologies of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke for not accompanying them; “he having been,” they said, “most unexpectedly summoned to Paris upon serious business, which had obliged him to set out too promptly to allow of his saying adieu at Rosindale Cottage, or to inquire if he might be honoured with any commands for Paris by his fair friends.”

A summons to Paris upon business might be the genuine cause of Sir Frederick’s sudden departure from Menroy Castle; but the heart of Olivia whispered that it was not; and that his suspended revenue, or her former coquetry, was the cause; and, after a bright blush, she blanched so evidently that Mrs. Brudenel felt alarmed: but soon, Olivia, having caught the scrutinizing glance of the penetrating Nettlethorp, resumed her blushes, in agitated apprehension, lest her heart’s secret should have been discovered; and, by a powerful struggle

with her disappointed hopes, commanded a sufficient show of natural vivacity to say, with very little tremor perceptible in her voice: —

“ But he means to fly back by the thirty-first, I presume; or, doubtless, there will be a flattering petition drawn up by the ladies of the county, praying Lady Lancefield to postpone her ball.”

“ I know not when he may return,” replied Nettlethorp; “ not being aware of the nature of the business which called him hence so hastily.”

“ It seemed like some suddenly recollected business of vast importance,” said Marchmont; “ for you must have remarked, Miss De la Warr, how charmingly animated he was during supper: but, after he returned to the ball, from handing you to your carriage, he fell into a sort of desponding fit of musing: then at length my gentleman disappeared, and I saw no more of him until the moment of our departure from Rosindale Park; when he re-appeared, as agitated and melancholy as a discarded lover, meditating a passage in

the Stygian ferry. During our travel home, he announced, ‘that he must be off with the veil of night, for Paris.’ ”

Marchmont told all this to Miss De la Warr, with the strong hope of disconcerting her; because he had imbibed conviction from his observations through the evening, that Sir Frederick, allured by her fascinations, had rashly offered her himself, and been rejected. Something of the same suspicion had entered the mind of Nettlethorp also; but, rough as he often was, he could not find courage to have uttered what the unthinking Marchmont had thus extemporized. Nor did Nettlethorp quite relish that the dignity of his inestimable friend should be thus degraded by letting her, whom he mentally pronounced “a confounded coquette, if not a jilt,” know how she had possessed the gratifying power to discompose a noble being, her superior in every thing but an unembarrassed fortune; and suddenly resolving she should not have this triumph to feed her vanity, said: —

“ There is no foreseeing what may unex-

pectedly arise in a ball-room to discompose a man ; what letter or message may be delivered to him, to call him out at early dawn."

"To call him *out!*" repeated Miss De la Warr, in a tone that could not be mistaken, no more than the cause which blanched her cheek once more.

"Not to fight a duel," said Nettlethorp, promptly, but calmly; first perceiving how this lovely young woman's heart was affected towards his friend, and delicately determining not to wound her feelings by betraying that she had disclosed her own secret. "No; Sir Frederick has evinced his courage too indisputably, to need the *éclat* of single combat in attestation of it; and he is, moreover, I rejoice to say, a determined anti-duellist."

"I am rejoiced, also, to hear this of my old friend," said Mrs. Brudenel; "but, Olivia, my dear Olivia, use no ceremony; retire, and I will excuse your doing so to these gentlemen."

Miss De la Warr now fled from the room to conceal her rising flood of emotion, and Mrs. Brudenel continued:—

“ My uncle, poor Olivia’s father, fell in a duel. You, therefore, cannot wonder, that —.” But this kind turn to the present feelings of her fair kinswoman proved fatal to the composure of the lovely speaker; for it sent a barbed arrow through her own susceptible bosom. For her husband, slain in combat, her tears now came in unbidden torrents.

Aware that, as almost perfect strangers, their absence must be now desirable, Nettlethorp and Marchmont hastily took their leave; but without evincing any thing like apathy, as the cause of their departure. But they had not proceeded far on their return to Menroy, ere Marchmont exclaimed :—

“ I will positively explode such excess of sensibility from the bosom of my heroines; it is such a confounded nuisance to one’s comfort. Twice, already, have I been routed from this cottage by this provoking susceptibility, in the very blossom of my *agrémens*. Who the deuce now would have thought that laughter-loving young witch had her over-takings of this aforesaid nuisance; or could

have suspected her of melting into tears, with cheeks blanched to the lily's hue, at a mere allusion to the sort of warfare by which she lost her father, when she was not higher than yon thistle. Why, this must be sensibility from inoculation; not the natural sort, Nettly, my sapient."

"Out, goose! or goose-quill! as you are threatening us with becoming," returned Nettlethorp. "Why, zounds! boy, you have no more penetration than the noddle of self-delusion. What could pierce your opacity with a belief that her deceased father had any thing to do with the present sensibility of Miss De la Warr, or could possess you to launch out with your surmises upon the cause of Sir Frederick's sudden departure; or me to follow the matter up? Had we left it simply as an unexpected summons to Paris, we might have been still pleasantly chatting with those two lovely creatures, and not unfortunately overwhelmed them both in tears."

"Hey, my sapient! Then you think the heiress was thrown into her confounded dol-

drums by alarm for the menaced life of the Baronet?"

"To be sure I do, boy. She is as deep in the quagmire of love for him, as the widow is in devotion to the memory of her gallant husband."

"Then, in the name of perversity, why did he abscond? I will vouch for his being in the aforesaid quagmire, up to his very ears."

"Why? To bring grist to your mill, boy, in giving you a fine romantic tale to work upon, of a Strephon in love and out of riches, flying from both, when both were ready and willing to smile propitiously upon him.

"I thank him and you for your kind hint," responded Marchmont; "but I will insert no such incomprehensibilities in my performances. But tell me, sapient, even in the case of this enchanting widow, will you not allow that her adherence to constancy and sensibility, and all these dolefuls, is very annoying? Were it not for these impediments ——"

"You could souse into the quagmire for her," exclaimed Nettlethorp, impatiently;

"and win her and wed her, as soon as your muse or your magpie would permit."

"Well," returned Marchmont, deeply blushing at a suspicion which had certainly something very like secret castle-building for its basis; "and would not even that be more desirable for her, than weeping herself into a fountain?"

"Tut, tut, boy! drive such visionary flights out of your head. I would not farm all you will make above twenty pounds a year by your pen, for five shillings per annum."

"How can you damp one's expectations in so unkind a manner, Nettly? I do not augur blight for all your crops, my sapient fellow."

"I am not unkind, Marchmont; I would only have you prepare yourself for the worst; for, if disappointment await you, you will then feel it less acutely: if success, your honours will sit with better grace upon you, unaccompanied by the self-importance arising from flattering expectations realized. In fact, Marchmont, you have no patron, no connexions, who will exert themselves to push

your productions into notice. I know successful authors would sneer at me, and proudly say, ‘ True merit, disdaining patronage, will find its own way to fame.’ And so it may, and must, in certain branches of literature. A truly learned work must be judged by specific rules; and, if it pass the ordeal of science, knowledge, &c. &c. it must glide along the current triumphantly. But works of imagination have no such definite code of laws. They depend, for approbation, on the human fancy, in all its strange varieties. We all know how capricious a personage this same dame fancy is; and that unless some high authority, or some breeze from fashion’s gale, can concentrate her wind and tide to one point, there is scarcely a hope of catching two of fancy’s jurors in the same opinion.”

“ Well, well,” returned Marchmont, “ let me hope the best; and prophesy, my sapient, that fashion will patronize my tales, and lead me on to fame; or, that some wise-head may discover my genius, and pronounce my works ‘ superlative.’ ”

" Why certainly, fashion, which has power to transform men into monkeys, and women into broken-backed deformities, as we saw exemplified last night, may achieve something for you, boy. But as to wise-heads, I would not give this mole-hill for their services, in a case of fancy. What coquette of his day would have called upon Diogenes to select ribands for her? and we, in modern times, know that Doctor Johnson could have sate as an eminent judge upon the bench of science; but, if record speak truth, who, that had seen his wife, would have pinned their faith upon his taste in fancy-wares?"

They now entered upon the little domain of Menroy, which naturally led them to think of its proprietor; and from thence to branch into a sort of conjectural conversation, upon the extraordinary cause of his flying from the woman he evidently loved, and by whom he was as evidently beloved; which continued until they reached the castle.

CHAPTER XIII.

BUT all the random arrows of Nettlethorp and Marchmont's conjectures strayed wide of the mark. It was neither inconsistency, nor unwillingness to be indebted to a wife for a restoration of affluence, which led Sir Frederick Bolingbroke so precipitately from England.

He had never felt the fascinations of Olivia so powerfully as on the evening of Lady Lancefield's ball; and brimful of them he found his head and heart, when he returned to the ball-room, after handing her to the carriage for her conveyance home.

“ Yes,” he mentally ejaculated, “ my heart judged her truly, when it whispered to my judgment, that her own good sense would mellow down the wild exuberance of her vivacity; and that, should fate lead her amongst the rational and domestic, she would become

all that was estimable in woman. How enchanting is now her tempered animation! It has gifted even her personal beauties with more resistless fascination. And how contentedly she remains at Rosindale Cottage; and with what unaffected pleasure she talked of her residence there! No—no; she is not acting a deceptive part. She is guileless as the babe in its expanding blossoms; and she would, I doubt not, make a most domestic wife to the man whom her heart could homage.

“ Oh, were I that man! But softly, my visionary friend, pause ere you run wildly into an attachment that has already caused you so much misery, to keep it in subjection. Does the auspicious promise of my agricultural speculation, the recovery of Trafford’s bond, the reverting of the Heam annuity —? Hold! this is no place for calculation upon a subject so momentous as my chance of happiness or misery.”

And now, to seek a spot in which he could uninterruptedly hold his cogitation; for the

hour in which the coach of Sir Cornelius had been ordered for the conveyance of their honours home, was not near to afford him the solitude of his pillow for such deliberation, Sir Frederick quitted the ball-room for the conservatory ; and behind the thick foliage of a skreen of luxuriant orange trees, placed himself out of view ; so much engaged by his own object of effecting concealment, that he observed not two ladies who had cautiously retraced his footsteps, and placed themselves at a distance from him, convenient for their project ; and in the true spirit of artful management, they burst out into their pre-concerted conversation, the moment they were seated, with the easy fluency of a discourse in continuation.

“ Nay, but I am positive this information of your friend must be true,” said Miss Daggerly, “ for surely there must be some powerful motive for their breaking out of the prison of sorrow, all at once, upon the amazed neighbourhood ; and at the gayest of gay revels ; and at the house too of such *petites gens*, as

the known pride of the cottage dame would else have shunned. Therefore, you may rely upon it, the fact is, as your friend states, and the innuendoes of the *volgo* mother intimated, to make up a match between Olivia De la Warr and the rich ‘son of air!’ this otherwise inexplicable intimacy has commenced.”

Sir Frederick started from his meditation, and his heart bounded with painful perturbation. The fair ladies continued :—

“ And I, who know more of the true state of certain affairs than the world does, or has suspicion of, know why Olivia D. strove, with all the magic of her potent charms, to draw in that profligate Lord Headland, and that apathetic Marquis of Silverthorn.”

“ Why, you astonish me!” returned Mrs. Titterton, in a tone of well-feigned amazement; “ how can a girl with her fine fortune prove so mercenary?”

“ Ah! my ingenuous friend! *tout ce qui reluit n'est pas or.* Some embark their stores in national, some in saving, and some in faro banks.”

“ Impossible! Why, she is a minor; and where should the urchin procure the means of paying, if unsuccessful, which you seem to intimate her having been?”

“ Why, through that very resource I became acquainted with her reprehensible impoverishment. My exquisite singing mistress, is, as you know, a Jewess, and her brother has absolutely been the accommodator. But, I do really wonder, since the Melmoths could not, that the Townlys did not, win her from the dangerous propensity; for Lady Caroline possessed great influence over her. But the scandalous chronicle does say, ‘ that Olivia had secrets to keep for her ladyship; and that each was to the other an indulgent friend.’ But come, dear Mrs. T., you must be sufficiently recruited by this time to return to the ball-room. I own I should like to dance more; and particularly with that soul of honour, and form of captivation — my fancy’s idol, Sir Frederick Bolingbroke; for besides the pleasing triumph of dancing with such an interesting being, I should like to learn from

him, if the scandal which begins at length to murmur forth at Paris, relative to Lady Caroline Townly, has reached the ear of the friend of her poor abused unsuspecting husband. I declare I did long to make that Olivia blush to-night, (and am now quite sorry I did let her escape me without it,) by giving her a gentle hint, that I was in the secret of the honourable post she holds of being confidante to the mutual passion of Lady Caroline and the Silverthorn of Love."

This Machiavellian, with her mischief-loving companion, now quitted the conservatory, leaving Sir Frederick so overpowered by dismay, that for several moments after her retreat the room seemed to whirl round him, and all the plants which it contained to be in waltzing motion; and he was at length compelled to rush precipitately into the open air, to conquer the indisposition which threatened to subdue him.

But though the jealous apprehensions of Sir Frederick had taken alarm, from his own recollection of events during that evening, his

heart refused its credence to one single tittle of all he had heard degrading to Olivia, until some dawning rays of doubt were introduced, by a sudden recollection of his own suspicions relative to the visible alteration in her conduct.

Yet still, in defiance of prudence, judgment, and suspicion, affection raised its voice in firm belief of Olivia's innocence, until the retrospection arose, like a dire phantom, of Olivia's deep blush, and evident embarrassment, when he had mentioned what she appeared not to have been aware of, Mr. Townly's being one of his earliest and dearest friends; and this retrospection was promptly followed by his recollecting Townly having mentioned to him, in one of his last letters, that "he had taken his wife to Paris, to break off her intimacy with a young female friend, which had been the source of much uneasiness to him:" and these reminiscences awakeded with them such a phalanx of suspicion, that he at length determined to set out for Paris, to conjure his friend to confide in him all that could militate against

his estimation of Miss De la Warr, were there any such agonizing intelligence to communicate. Still, however, he clung to the hope, the fondly cherished hope, that this anxious expedition would lead him back, the champion of Olivia, gifted with the power of throwing down his gage to those who should dare to asperse her innocence.

In the wild impatience of his tortured feelings, Sir Frederick Bolingbroke made his rapid way to Dover; and not until arrived there, and impatiently waiting for the sailing of a packet to convey him across the Channel, did his engagement with Olivia for the thirty-first recur to his remembrance, with his having thus a second time most ungallantly flown from the fulfilment of so enviable an obligation.

It certainly was possible for him to be at Rosindale Park in time to claim the promise of Miss De la Warr; but as the result of his conference with Mr. Townly might lead him to avoid her for ever, he thought it judicious policy to prepare for such an afflicting measure,

whilst yet a plausible excuse for absenting himself was in his power. He therefore wrote upon the subject to Fauconberg, appointing him his substitute, should occasion require one; and enclosing an introductory letter to Miss De la Warr, containing all the apology for his own unavoidable absence, which urbanity could demand.

Having at length crossed the Channel, Sir Frederick lost not a moment in setting out for Paris; where repairing to the hotel of Mr. Townly, the moment he presented himself at the porter's lodge, Norton, Mr. Townly's old and attached valet, rushed out of the lodge, exclaiming: —

“ Oh, Sir Frederick ! Heaven has sent you hither ! Oh, sir ! my poor master !”

“ What of your master ? ” responded Sir Frederick, in all the alarm of anticipation the distress of Norton's manner inspired.

“ Oh, sir ! can you credit it ? My lady has eloped from him — left him, handsome, young, and amiable, as he is, and forsaken her lovely innocent babe, to become the com-

panion of that false deceiver, the Marquis of Silverthorn!"

The heart of Sir Frederick sickened with more than sympathizing friendship; and in a voice faltering with agitation, demanded to see Mr. Townly.

The scene was of course a most distressing one, which took place between the cruelly deceived husband and his sympathizing friend; for Mr. Townly had idolized his wife, believing her superior to all her sex in excellence; and had classed amongst the most amiable of mankind the Marquis of Silverthorn, whom Lady Caroline had taught him to believe ill-used by the volatile Olivia De la Warr, "for whose sake he was at Paris, under the fondly cherished hope of Lady Caroline being able to effect his union with the fair coquette."

After the dire pangs of this almost distracted husband's first burst of anguish, in his interview with his highly esteemed friend, had in some degree subsided, he informed Sir Frederick, "that the police were then employed in tracing out for his pursuit the *route* of the

fugitives, Lady Caroline having taken care to leave no clew behind ; the first intimation of her shocking conduct having come from her own *femme de chambre*, who had deposited a note on the nurse's pillow, announcing the elopement, the morning of the fatal flight."

"Then how are you assured, my inestimable friend," said Sir Frederick, "that Lady Caroline has not been trepanned away ? Have you not inspected her papers ?"

The hapless Townly had never once thought of such a usual measure ; nor had the soothing hope ever dawned upon his desolation, with which his friend, in his anxiety for his restoration to happiness, so unwarily inspired him. But that hope once awakened, he rushed to his wife's deserted apartments, and had her writing-desk broken open. This accomplished, his firmness faltered —

" You must explore the contents, Frederick — I have not courage," he said. " Read all, every thing : not only can I confide in your honour, but in your judgment.

All that is necessary for the desolate husband to know, you will impart to him."

In this depository of Lady Caroline's papers, the agitated Baronet — agitated not only with sympathetic anticipation for his friend, but in terror lest there, too, might be discovered something to impeach the excellence of her he loved, found only memoranda of bills, and a packet of letters ; the signature of one of which announced, by the hand-writing of the superscription, the individual from whom they had all come.

" These letters are all from Miss De la Warr," said Sir Frederick, in the tremulous tones of pitiable agitation. " They scarcely can reflect any light upon this calamitous subject."

" I know not that," responded the heart-wrung husband : " Miss De la Warr's name was made the pretext of his fatal intimacy here, possibly with her permission ; for she is the identical friend from whose pernicious influence I removed my wife. Read these

letters — read them, Frederick ; and tell me, I conjure you, all — nay, the very worst of all, the cruel wounds for me which they contain."

" But, a—but, is—is it honourable, at least for me, to explore the communications of Miss De la Warr to her friend ?" stammered out the agitated lover. " No, surely, I cannot have a right to inspect her confidential secrets. Let me implore you to summon up courage yourself, my dear Townly ; for if they must be inspected, you are ——— "

" I cannot," replied Townly, impatiently ; " and if you will not, Frederick, Norton must. Consider, therefore, which will prove the safest confidant of this unworthy girl's secrets. Oh, Frederick ! you who have known and loved me since our boyish days, wave this punctilio ; and have pity on the anguished feelings of your distracted friend. Read — I implore you ; and tell me, if you there find a hope for me, that Caroline is not depraved."

There was now no alternative ; and the film was so dense that floated before the eyes of

the trembling lover, as he opened the commencing letter of Olivia's correspondence from Rosindale (for the packet was methodically arranged, according to succession of dates), he could hardly distinguish the first page or two; for the vivacious frivolity which he here and there caught a glimpse of had no power to dissipate the mist; and not until she reverted to her father, did his senses take in any thing connectedly, nor until she mentioned the effect her contemplation of her parents' portraits had upon her eyes, was the cloud dispersed from his own.

In Olivia's next letter, the manner in which she mentioned her wealth led him at one glance to pronounce all that Miss Daggerly had vouched, relative to Olivia's losses at play, a vile calumny; and thus exonerated on one accusation, his heart at once honourably acquitted her upon every other that had been, or could be brought against her: but the apparent gaiety of Olivia's heart saddened his; for hers, it was now plain, was the untouched one that had never cherished one

softening thought of love for him ; so that the hope he had once cherished, now stood confessed, as the vain delusion of his own deceptious wishes.

Most unexpectedly, therefore, came before Sir Frederick's eyes, Miss De la Warr's account of her perilous adventure near Love's precipice ; every circumstance of which being indelibly engraven upon his retentive memory, struck with conviction to his almost joy-maddened heart, the knowledge by whom she had been drawn towards this peril : and soon the auspicious termination of her narrative yielded him the rapturous assurance, that she had been led further down the precipice than she acknowledged ; while his change of countenance, and visible perturbation, proved causes of so much alarm to his poor observing friend, that the only method left for Sir Frederick to allay the agonized apprehensions he had awakened, was to confess the actual state of his own mind, and the terrors he had experienced, lest he should find aught to convince him, that he too had been deceived.

But, at length, Olivia's third letter from Rosindale Cottage so completely exonerated her from every suspicion of confederacy, in so dire a breach in religious and moral obligations, afforded such proof of the rectitude of her principles, of her abhorrence of vice, and of her delicate conception of connubial attachment, that in all the exultation of his approving and devoted heart, Sir Frederick presented this letter to Townly, as Olivia De la Warr's full acquittal; whilst he proceeded in the further investigation of the packet, which, when read to the end, left not one hope, one expectation, one wish, relative to Olivia, ungratified. She was all that his judgment and fancy could approve, and she loved him—loved him for telling her of her errors—loved him on a basis which guaranteed no failure; and could he but arrange his finances into a competence, he doubted not the generous Olivia, the now every way excellent Olivia, would be his, and he should be the happiest of the happy.

The letters of Miss De la Warr having

been fully investigated, and her innocence placed beyond all doubt, Mr. Townly suddenly recollecting there being private drawers in this writing-desk. It required all the ingenuity of the two friends to discover them; but they were at last discovered and explored, and in them was detected a correspondence of a widely different nature from Olivia's; for here were deposited letters from the vile seducer to his victim, presenting so diabolical a tissue of art, perfidy, falsehood, and depravity, in every form, that although the long-deceived husband now recoiled in horror and abhorrence from the woman he had so long and affectionately loved; yet for the sake of his cherub, his helpless infant, he heroically determined to inflict upon his own heart all the misery of beholding her unmasked, and to snatch her, if possible, from perdition.

As in this diabolical correspondence was revealed the plan and route of the apparently long meditated elopement, Mr. Townly knew where to trace the fugitives; and instantly setting forward, Sir Frederick Bolingbroke,

though panting to obey the voice of love, attended to the now more imperious one of friendship, and accompanied the unfortunate Townly; not only to give him every consolation that sympathy could supply, but to prevent, by his prudent management, every fatal catastrophe from vindictive measures.

CHAPTER XIV.

IT was through the medium of the public channels of intelligence, and without any prefatory warning of the shock, that Olivia De la Warr received the unexpected information of the depravity of Lady Caroline Townly, her associate under the guardianship of Sir Walter Melmoth: and the shock fell so heavily upon her pure mind, that it subdued her to serious indisposition, from which her convalescence was only commenced at the period in which her aunt, uncle, and Mr. Stanhope arrived from Portsmouth.

The expressive brow of General De la Warr betrayed deep anxiety, but his manner wore that of the perfect composure of manly fortitude; and the only reference to the business which so deeply interested him and his confidential friends, that transpired before the

younger inmates of the cottage, was in allusions to the General's determination of embarking very shortly for Spain.

On the day of the General's return to Rosindale, as the family were sitting after dinner, he inquired, "When Lady Lancefield's next *gala* was to take place?"

"In two days," Mrs. Brudenel replied; "but as Lady Lancefield has unexpectedly adopted the plan of a masqued ball, our quiet party have determined not to go, more particularly as Olivia's present depression of spirits presents her negative to the undertaking."

"I am not quite satisfied, my dear Constantia," said the General, "that it is perfectly judicious, allowing the world, through this excess of sensibility, to imagine Olivia's friendship for a woman who has disgraced her sex is that deeply-seated one which springs from kindred minds."

It had been at no period of Olivia's life a difficult achievement, inducing her to the adoption of opinions formed by those to whose

judgment she looked up, or to a compliance with their wishes; and at no moment could she have been found more amenable to submission; since, as the first dire shock at her friend's enormity had subsided, the purity of her own mind had already taken her to task, not only for having bestowed her friendship so unworthily, but for not at once vanquishing every particle of affection she had so long cherished for Lady Caroline, to whom the depravity of the man she had suffered to seduce her from all that was estimable was fully known; whose amiable husband had been her own unbiassed choice; and who, being in her twenty-third year, was no such very child of inexperience in the world's wiles as to have any very strong claim to commiseration; while Olivia had almost doubted, if even her recent indisposition upon the occasion had not been a degrading weakness.

Added to the above, Fauconberg had delivered to the hand of Mrs. Brudenel the apologetic letter of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke; and

announced his own hope that Miss De la Warr would be sufficiently recovered to confer the honour of her hand on him, as substitute for his friend, at the ball of Lady Lancefield.

Olivia believed that she was fully acquainted with the cause which had drawn Sir Frederick from Menroy Castle so precipitately. She conceived that his friend's calamity had been imparted to him after she had left Rosindale Park, and that he had flown to comfort the forsaken husband. For the kind feeling thus ascribed to Sir Frederick, she only the more esteemed him; and felt sorry at not complying with his request of admitting his friend as his substitute at the ball; and not quite at rest in the idea of absenting herself from a second ball upon the truancy of the Baronet, lest he might be led to ascribe it to some sort of tender feeling of disappointment. It was, therefore, no great trial of skill to lead Olivia into the promise of "reanimating her spirits, and to banish Lady Caroline Townly from her serious thoughts, except when her heart aspi-

rated thanksgivings where they were justly due, for severing the bonds of friendship with so worthless an individual."

It was with painful reluctance Mrs. Brudenel yielded her acquiescence to her uncle's proposition for her appearance in such a scene of augmented revelry ; and nothing could have lulled the murmur of her heart at such an apparent slight to her husband's memory, had not Olivia proposed for herself and cousin the unattractive quiet of conventional habits.

Upon this proposition relative to habit being agreed to, Mrs. Manners determined to appear as a Lady Abbess, that she might form an appropriate appendage to her precious charge ; and the General gave up his project of gratifying the brave Sir Cornelius by a grand military display of a Cossack Chief, the costume of which he had amongst his baggage, to hide his laurels under a cowl, and become a brother of the order of Santa Olivia.

Olivia, believing it necessary to have it intimated to Mr. Fauconberg that she was sufficiently recovered from her recent indisposition

to fulfil her engagement, felt very much disappointed on finding her uncle was not to prove her ambassador; and extreme surprise on learning that the General, wishing to avoid the homage of Sir Cornelius and his worthy helpmate, which would inevitably betray him and his party to all the wit or malice of the masked revellers, had resolved not to allow his arrival at Rosindale Cottage to transpire; and that, therefore, he would pay no preparatory visit to his brother soldiers at Menroy Castle.

Upon Mrs. Manners, therefore, devolved the task of announcing to Fauconberg Miss De la Warr's intention; and in her note upon the subject, Mrs. Manners mentioned "her having in her care some foreign costumes belonging to her brother, with which it would afford her much pleasure to accommodate Mr. Fauconberg and his friends for Lady Lancefield's masqued ball."

The note and offer of Mrs. Manners animated the exuberant spirits of Marchmont to the wildest transports: the one implied the

interesting Alethea would be at the ball, and the other flattered him with what his own finances could not—the power of appearing at Rosindale Park in costume worthy of being admitted in the train of the fascinating widow.

Prior to the polite offer of Mrs. Manners, which in fact had emanated from the considerate General himself, the kind and liberal Deb had requested their honours “not to worry themselves about clothing and accoutrements.”

“For,” said she, “your honours having no mothers and sisters in Lunnun to see after the fancy of the derangement for you, I have taken it upon myself, lest you might be made rum figures on by those as were strangers to you. So I have ordered the tradesfolks as provides all things to send a good muster of uniforms of all nations, such as I should improve; and they knows by this time as I am not one to be satisfied with trumpery stuff.”

After a moment’s deliberation upon the subject with Nettlethorp, Albert determined to acknowledge the previous offer of Lady

Lancefield as the cause of declining the kindness of Mrs. Manners; and after a moment of expostulation with Marchmont, he also felt it a duty he owed to gratitude to give up the adonising of the elegant Mrs. Manners, "to be, with his devoted fellow sufferers, vulgarised by the 'derangements' of honest kind-hearted Deb into scarecrows for masquerade disguise."

But the intelligence conveyed in the note of Mrs. Manners did not prove as agreeable to Fauconberg as to Marchmont; the change of intention relative to the ball in the fair ladies of the cottage proved no joy to him. But Albert owed Sir Frederick Bolingbroke too much to negative his request, even did the laws of gallantry now permit it, although a compliance might writh his heart by Olivia's resemblance to the too interesting Alvina.

The day preceding that appointed for the ball, the dresses for their honours arrived at Menroy Castle; and to the infinite relief of Marchmont, although masquerade habiliments presented nothing to disguise them, for the

munificent Deb, through a sort of kindred feeling with the profuse Betty Blackberry, had determined "that their honours should wear, or at least have the power of wearing, over this that, and over that the other," as for each of their honours a diversity of costumes arrived, and all of the most splendid nature.

As Fauconberg was to attend the ball expressly for the purpose of dancing with Miss De la Warr, and possibly not a little influenced by some tender partiality to the country where he had beheld Alvina, he selected from his "muster of uniforms" that of a *boleristo*, and also a *capa*, with which, when not dancing, he would have it in his power to shade his splendid foppery.

Nettlethorp, considering it advisable, as they were to go together, to form something of a group, by attiring as the same nation, selected the superb uniform of a Guerilla Chief, and Marchmont the magnificent one of a Knight of the Royal *Maestranza**.

* Knights of Granada, Seville, &c. who are bound,

When all this was arranged, and the superfluities in the muster of uniform returned to the liberal Deb, Marchmont was suddenly seized with a pang of regret, "that he had not in preference selected something more of a character to sustain."

"What, boy! a suitor to Penelope?" exclaimed Nettlethorp. "My life on the die, it would prove 'love's labour lost' in that quarter. No, no, constancy there turns the pennant to the memory of the hero slain. Forget not the success of your ditty, boy."

"Pshaw!" responded Marchmont, "what a nuisance is sapience and a retentive memory!"

"Faith, I would pronounce it more genuine sapience to speculate upon possibilities," returned Nettlethorp, "and to give up Penelope for the damsel who may be won, if the assailant does not please to fly from the siege."

"Bah! do not talk to me of Olivia, who

with their vassals, to attend the King in person when he goes to war.

is no more to be compared to Alethea than

“ Than your Tales will be to those of “ My Landlord,” said Nettlethorp.

“ That’s true, for your honour, Mr. Marchmont,” said Dermod, who was waiting at dinner during this amicable sparring. “ Mr. Watts, down yander beyant, at Madam Manners’s, whin I wint wid your honour’s inquiries after Miss De la Warr’s health, tould me ‘ that Miss De la Warr is no more to compare for beauty to Mrs. Brudenel, ere grief put its blight upon her blossoms, nor a straw is to a potato.’ ”

“ But in this case, Dermod, we cannot allow Mr. Watts to be an impartial judge,” said the plaintive Cameron, who, ever since their perilous adventures in Albert’s hut, considered Dermod more as a friend than a domestic. “ The attachment of Mr. Watts to the memory of Admiral Manners has taught him to consider Mrs. Brudenel the fairest daughter of creation.”

“ Why, then, sorrow morsel unnatural is

that same, your honour. Just as myself plumes upon my attachment to my master. I'll engage now, there is not a man or mortal, down from Mrs. Venus to your honour, that I'd be allowing to compare wid master Albert."

" Except me, Dermod," exclaimed Marchmont, smiling significantly at his companions. " All the world acknowledge I far surpass your master,"

" Is it surpass my master? *Ough, murder!* But wait, your honour, and you'll see 'tis a world like the depopulated mountains which we inhabited in Spain, with not a woman to bless our sight, and pass her elegant judgment. Why, your honour, Mr. Cameron himself, let alone Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, much less your honour, would not go to disparage his sense, by fancying the humbug that he surpassed my master! Why not a man in Ireland does, let alone in England, your honour!"

" But what say you to Spain, Dermod? By all accounts Don Ramirez, without much vanity, might compare with this paragon of yours," said Marchmont, demurely.

"I'd be entirely obliged to you, Mr. Marchmont, your honour," returned Dermod, gravely, "not to be mentioning that miscreant wid the salt at the left hand of your plate, bekease, by the same token, myself destroyed the comfort of my sleep by dreaming I had a serpent's head, which I detected to be that miscreant's, for my pillow, whilst its body was coiling round my master. And on my safe conscience, Carlo benefited as little by his night's rest, having something like a ditto to my dream; for after my dream roused me from my troubled sleep, he wakened me up wid his fierce growling and curling his nose in his slumber, for all the world as if Ramirez—botheration to him!—was treating us with a rogue's whistle."

"But what can the position of my salt have to do with your dream, Dermod?"

"Not much, your honour, barring through omen, just for fear to be drawing out of the seasoning of superstition a bad interpretation to one's dreams."

"Well, but I would not dream any more of

Ramirez, were I you, Dermod," returned Marchmont, " now you are safely deposited in England, and can find some pleasanter theme for the subject of your visions."

" *Och*, faith, your honour, if your luck had presented you with Senor Ramirez beaming deformity before your vision, and squinting villainy through all his oblique rays upon you, for so many long days and nights, as Carlo and myself done. And had your honour heard the lion's roar, in which he thundered out his orders to his murdering legions, to be giving us no quarter, for all the world as if his tiger-teeth watered to tear me into mince-mate ; to distil my darlingt master's pure and precious heart's-drop into *villa nova** or *granatché* ; and to suck the marrow out of poor dear Mr. Cameron's noble bones, your honour would be mighty apt to dream of him through many an aguish month after ; though, may be, good taste would like the differ of placing the young ladies of the White Cottage in his stead, and no blame to your honour for that same !"

THE HUT AND THE CASTLE. * Red wines.

aving this doldry may gallanories to you [such
as it is not fit for] I went out to [the country] but
it brought me to one of [my] friends I was
brought up with **CHAPTER XV.**

On the following morning, whilst our subalterns were assembled at their breakfast board, Lady Lancefield made her appearance in Menroy Castle, for the purpose of making one more effort to persuade Cameron to attend her magnificent gala; but although gentle as the accents of gratitude and urbanity could make the negatives of Cameron, yet he was firm in non-compliance with her wishes.

"*Hélas!* your honour," at length Deb said, with a sigh from the centre of her feeling heart, "I fears, *par ma foi!* it is ill health which makes this mope of one of the very finest and elegantest *gentilshommes* in Europe. So it has just struck me, for your honours knows my old way of my liking to have my finger in every one's pie, that the south of France, or Florence, or Itly [Italy], wou'd be far better for you than this here staggard [stag-

nant] moat surmounting you, which only gives bad impressions of the lungs. So, as for the cause I mentioned, we are going abroad by fort wit [forthwith], you had better condescend to become my child, and accompany us. Mother Deb will be your nurse and your parent; Curnailus will be proud of his son; and his boys will be proud of being your servants; for they know themselves better than to be presumption in considering themselves worthy of being your honour's brothers."

The heart which beamed through every word, and tone, and look of Deb in this address, came with full effect to the susceptibility of all her auditors; but the individual to whom it was addressed it completely subdued, and, with a blanched cheek and tearful eyes, he grasped her hand in the fervour of his agitated feelings, but could neither articulate his thanks nor his negative to her kind proposition for many moments, so much of what she had uttered had struck barbed arrows to the hidden anguish that oppressed him. At length, however, the poor heart-broken Ca-

meron did most gracefully express his grateful negative, in which he amazed his companions, Nettlethorp and Marchmont, by the information, “ That he was shortly going with Fauconberg, upon business, into Spain.”

“ *Parbleu!* it can make no odds to us, your honour, whether we nurses you and performs the part of your tender parents in Spain or elsewhere; *sur ma vie*, it cannot. You knows it is for the learning of manners as we are going from dear old England; and if our brigade marches under yours and Lieutenant Fauconberg’s command, we marches under the banners of two of the best general-scholars in manners to be found in any place. And we should learn more of you than gold could purchase, whilst we could furnish you with more comforts, in our way of marching, than young gentlemen, who—a—a—without mothers at their heels to look after the sheets they sleeps in, and all other accommodations, would attend to. *Pardi*, if you do but permit us to be your companions, your humble companions, in this your expedition after health, you

will reconcile poor Curnailus to state and fortune. *En bonne foi!* it will pacify him for being somebody, if he thinks he is useful to your honours; and that he can range once more the fields of past danger and vic-victory with you, by whose side he fought and bled; and march over with you the very ground he marched over with you as an humble subordinate; whilst I, *par ma foi*, but I will—I will treat you as I do my Julus. Come, come, do not, pray do not, feel so piteously, Mr. Cameron, dear *gentilhomme*. I only means to do by you what, I am certain, was your honoured mother in my shoes, and *mon mignon* in yours, she would do by Julus."

" My dear and excellent Lady Lancefield!" exclaimed Fauconberg, as tears strayed down his quivering cheeks, " you subdue poor Cameron by this excess of kindness. I, who am in perfect health, am so much affected by your goodness, that my power of thanking you, as I could wish, is vanquished. But when we are less under the active influence of our grateful feelings, Cameron and I will talk over your

kind offer, and will then renew [the] subject with you, and our old friend and gallant fellow soldier."

"Do, dear young *gentilshommes*," returned Deb; "but leave neither the benefit of your company would afford us ignorant folks, nor the gratification it would give the waliant old soldier and his notable rib, out of your consequential conversation. And now, pray, Lieutenant Nettlethorp, may I beg leave to ask, if it will be illconvenient — — —"

"In-convenient, my dear madam," exclaimed Nettlethorp, with warm-hearted impetuosity. "You have a devilish deal too much excellence in your composition, for your well-wishers to sit tamely by and allow you to say or do any thing to make the unthinking sneer."

"I can retort your own words upon you, Nettlethorp," exclaimed Marchmont. "How came you to make that unthinking personage, Sidney Marchmont, grin at your applying— devilish—to excellence personified in Lady Lancefield?"

“ I stand corrected, boy ; but you know I am a rough pebble of our coast,” said Nettlethorp.

“ Let me correct you too, and substitute in the reading, ‘ a diamond, from the same rich mine that supplied Sir Cornelius Lancefield with his better half,’ ” said Fauconberg.

“ Thanks, dear *gentilshommes*, for your kindness, whether it comes in compliment or otherwise,” said Lady Lancefield ; “ for, springing from kindness, it comes as a cordial to my grateful heart. So now, good Mr. Nettlethorp, will it be *inconvenient* to you to come with me to the park, and see if the tradesfolks have done things so as we shall not be laughed at ; and to persuade Curnailus and Danel to be a little civilized, and not meditate being *sauvages des Indes* in their own *maison*.”

“ To whom can they *meditate* being *savages* ?” demanded Marchmont, with kind emphasis.

“ Why, a couple of trumpery *babillardes*, as made their game on me the last night we exhibited our wul-vulgarities for public amuse-

ment," responded Lady Lancefield; "but, that Bousy and his *bien-aimée* took patiently, as what Julus says, 'is the heavy tax we must pay for our vagrandizement.' No, the *diable*, there popped out the vulgar *borrácha*, as Julus calls my lapswings lingo, by which I thought the *garçon* meant my French; but he since explained the lingo, as I never forgets. No, I meant for to say Julus's own proper word, 'aggrandisement.'

"Ah, dear *gentilshommes*, how little do poor mortals know what is good for happiness! Those greedy folks, who want to overturn the state, to pop into dead men's shoes, might take a useful lesson at Rosindale Park. With the competence we earned by the sweat of our brow, we were happy folks, respected in our station, and no make-game for our comrades. Who was more at home in the field than brave Curnailus Lancefield? Who more esteemed, or looked up to, in her way, than strapping Deb? Ay, *en bonne foi*, Mr. Nettlethorp, although she might sometimes draw upon herself the epaulette [epithet] of

'saucy faggot!' she was not, as now, the make game of the company she entertained. No, with her mop, and her pail, and her spit, and her washing-tub, she had *de l'esprit au bout des doigts*. What is she now? *Mon Dieu!*" with an expressive shrug of her shoulders, "not to be envied."

"That I deny, possessed of such a heart," said the grateful Cameron; "with such *tact*, all that is wanting will not long be absent."

"Heaven grant it, your honour, for the sake of my poor boys. Upon their account I am, in truth, more nonplushed at jeers, than on my own; I trembles, lest a broad grin at my expense should cause a broad wound; and were either of my boys to be slain in a duel, on account of my ignorance, *sur ma vie*, I should run crazy on my fortune."

"But, Lady Lancefield, you have not informed us against whom Sir Cornelius and Mr. Daniel Lancefield are meditating hostilities," said Marchmont.

"Why, sir, a Mrs. Titterton and her *companero* in wit, Miss Daggerlie, as Will Bird

— you know our *ci-devant* horn-player — heard, a-backbiting that sweet creature Miss Della Warr! Oh, *elle est gentille, charmante, amiable*, is she not, your honours? So, Curnailus, on hearing Bird's report, has ordered me, *pardi*, to send and demand my invitation back again. And how, my dear *gentilshommes*, can I have the face to do so, as they have been overwhelming me with civilities since my last “At Home?” A couple of matchless villains! [Machiavellians] for, no doubt, all this *caresse* is to sponge from my memory some unpleasant facts I made bold to tell them to stop their jeers.”

“ But Curnailus says, ‘if I does not send for my invitation, he will have a file of men down from the barracks, for the purpose of unmasking every woman who presents a covered face for admittance; and that, when these backbiting *coquines* are thus surprised in their ambush, to fairly drum them out of the garrison.’ And, *par ma foi*, your honours, but he has gone so far in his menasses [menaces] as to set the band to practising the

rogue's march for the occasion. For he says, ' it would be contrary to the articles of war, to have an ally ambuscaded in his territories by sly deflammation, and for him not to enter into hostilleries [hostilities] against the treacherous foe.' As to Danel, *sur ma vie*, he swears more wul—vulgarly than his father; for *quant à lui, il jure comme un charretier embourbé*, as he says, ' that great an ally as that Daggard—I has endeavoured to be of his — for she has been monsous sociable with the garçon—he will chalk her back with proprieate names, can he but find out such as would not be too wulgar for the rest of the gentry to read.'

At length the hour arrived for opening the splendidly illuminated and superbly decorated mansion of Sir Cornelius Lancefield, to receive the assemblage thronging thither; "where motley was to be the only wear;" a description of ball which the acute Deb believed the best adapted to veil the glaring deficiencies of her-

self, spouse, and younger boy, from the penetrating eye of ridicule.

During more than a dozen years of campaigning on the Peninsula, with her brave husband, she had seen much of this species of entertainment; and, knowing for how many vices it presented masks, she conceived it would as adroitly present screens for mal-address and ignorance; since, as all were to appear in characters and occupations not their own, the perforce assumption of what was not natural to the performer would pass unjeered at.

But, whilst Lady Lancefield left her elder born to his own taste—which she considered of the very first order—for the selection of his own costume, and that her younger would not, as he said, “let her busy spoon meddle with his porridge,” she resolved upon Sir Cornelius’s and her own. She had been highly entertained, whilst abroad, on seeing the Beaux Stratagem performed by some officers, to beguile the monotony of a garrison station; and her sagacity had, perhaps, never

evinced itself more judiciously than now; when, in defiance of all the tempting lures of her own strong passion for dress, she determined upon Boniface and Cherry, as characters, which her spouse and herself could, as the host and hostess of their own hospitable mansion, perform, without apprehension of those wits who might meditate an ambuscade to expose their ignorance.

Sir Cornelius, who also remembered the play he had laughed so heartily at abroad, gave up, without a murmur, his own favourite project of appearing as the Duke of Wellington, when convinced by Deb that he would feel more at home in Boniface; might smoke a segar without scruple, and, above all, wear a night-cap; for one of the most grievous annoyances which he complained of, in the elevation of his fortunes, arose from the necessity of appearing uncovered in the house; since the helmet, or military cap, which for many a year had been a daily fixture upon his brow, were regretted as comforts rendered necessary by habit, and of which fortune had

cruelly bereaved him. And this deprivation taught him daily murmurs against the blind goddess for making him so light-headed—though not light-hearted, as the poor Baronet, for individual comfort—would, with rapture, have set up his title and estates to auction, to purchase for himself a snug public-house, under the designation of the Wellington Head, or the De la Warr Arms; and for comrades, with whom he could stand at ease.

In respectful deference to the name Miss De la Warr had bestowed upon him, Julius Lancefield determined to habit himself as Prince Le Boo; hoping, like his mother, that by the assumption of an appropriate character, he might escape the shaft of ridicule.

Daniel, in the exuberance of his purse and of his fancies, determined to try, in brief sketches, all sorts and conditions of mankind. Playfully to plague his mother by being in her way; and to counteract her bustling notability by his own, he resolved upon giving a few of his precious moments to Scrub; for he, too, had seen the Beaux Stratagem. To please

his father, he had promised to dedicate a whole hour to the personification of Maréchal Blucher; and to confer honour on even Miss De la Warr, by waltzing with her, as that celebrated warrior. Whilst, to please himself, he purposed to exhibit in every character "as was knowing, and dashy, and fashionable, and elegant, and captivating, and brave, and funny, and comical ; but not low, nor smelling of the shop."

" And dang it," he exclaimed, after his breathless termination of the above capacious resolutions ; " how the motley folks will stare, when I springs up the mine of my inwentions and clever manœuvres around them ! *Parbleu!* when I dashes off as Paul, in my *pas seul*, one lass will cry '*il est bien d'aplomb !*' another, mayhap Mrs. Brudenel, '*comme il baisse les pointes !*' another, perhaps Miss De la Warr herself, '*il a beaucoup de grace !*' Then, when I marches in as the Emperor Alexander ; then as Nepton with his stride on,*

* Trident.

then as Nelson's ghost, then as Apollar, then as this, then as that, then as t'other, and so on ; blow me, but the folks will take me for a negro-man-sir ! Appear ! disappear ! high presto ! like the power and valor of Bonny, under the magic of our arms.

" By the bugles ! but I wish I might introduction Will Bird as my comrade in my comicallities and my flashy hairs. No ; not as my comrade. Dang the rum word, how glib it runs off my tongue, surelie ! No, as my toad-hater, my spickafont [sycophant], my led captain. Whew ! that last won't do ; blow me, but Corny would call that ' an affront to their honours, for having been led by their commanders. Well, and was not that to glory ? And may not I lead Will Bird, under a masked battery, to the glory of being my lady mother's company ? And I will, too, if I can but strike out how he can accomplice me in some taliation on that spitfire h—ll-cat, Miss D—I's dagger, and that other grinning witch. *Morbleu*, if I was not sprucing up to be a man of fashions, I could sing out

rhyme to that there witch to the ticking of my ear, in a proper burden of my song of hatred. Nation d—ls ! to chuck out malicious slanders in such *une volée*, in the hearing of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke ! And what a nation noodle that there Baneret must be, if he gave ear to their cursed jaw. Hist, zounds ! I have it. Hurra ! Will shall be at the ball ; shot in there by the mortar of my invention. Drum me out of the assembly but he shall, to be my ally in wengeance on the enemy of that sweet Miss Oliviar ; who *danse comme un ange*, blow me ! And blow you too, Mr. Will, you shall, the trump of wictory over this angel's enemies. So, I'll be off like a shot, to give my orderly his cue."

CHAPTER XVI.

SIR CORNELIUS and Lady Lancefield, now admirably attired as Boniface and his daughter Cherry, took their places in a convenient station to welcome the thronging guests to 'the Lancefield Arms,' and performed to defy ridicule, for even the tough veteran took to his character most naturally.

Daniel, with all his deficiencies, and with all his juvenile spirits in high buoyancy, yet possessed a large portion of his mother's acuteness; and gifted, also, with no small share of comic humour, he performed his Scrub inimitably; but having failed, by delighting her, to plague his mother through his clashing notability, he soon relinquished that character.

Amongst the numerous guests, who, in their diversified personations, flocked from all parts of their own and the neighbouring counties to Rosindale Park, the three Spaniards from

Menroy Castle, and the conventual community from the white cottage, arrived in good time.

There is something in the genuine martial air, as in freemasonry, that never escapes the perfectly initiated ; for the not otherwise very penetrating Boniface placed his hand on his forehead, *en militaire*, to General De la Warr, on bidding him welcome to the Lancefield Arms ; although not knowing who was concealed beneath the pontifical habit of an abbot in all its bravery, and ushered him with his party to a post which Boniface considered one of the highest in honour the decorated suite contained : but not even through this long escort did the abbot-general reveal himself to his respected brother of the militant order, lest he should disclose to others that arrival which he wished yet to remain concealed.

The costume of Mrs. Manners was a most magnificent representation of the state robes of the superior of a richly endowed monastery in Spain ; and her whole appearance so per-

fectly accorded with her majestic station, that she first arrested the eye of general observation to her party; but which as generally found more permanent attraction in the simply attired sisters, who formed her train. Mrs. Brudenel, habited as a nun professed, and Miss De la Warr as a novice of the same order.

Although his strikingly fine form was concealed by the enveloping *capa*, yet the gracefulness with which he arranged that envelopement, identified Fauconberg to the penetrating eye of General De la Warr; who, in the feigned voice of disguising precaution, accosted Albert with the appropriate language of his monastic function:—

“Heaven speed you, my son, in the land of a succouring ally,” he said: “but how came you hither, so many miles from home?”

“I have been led hither by fate, most reverend father,” returned Fauconberg; “but pray, may I retort your question, and ask you how I came to have the pleasure of meeting with one of my own nation so far from Hispania?”

" I came hither, my son, upon an embassy from our sanctuary of Santa Barbara, commissioned with the grateful benediction of that holy saint to one of this happy isle; for beneficent aid to some of her helpless votaries in their sore afflictions. You start, and seem agitated by some feeling of surprise, my son. Have you a pre-knowledge of this matter; and can you prove my guide to the humane and gallant senor, of whom I am in anxious search? But, hold; here approaches an associate in my mission—the superior of a monastery, dedicated to that holy saint whose delegate I am."

" Can it be!" exclaimed the agitated Fauconberg, starting forward, to meet Mrs. Manners, by accident arrayed as a portrait of the Abbess of Santa Barbara, which Albert had observed in that pillaged monastery. " But, no; the difference in height proclaims this not the friend whom I should rejoice to see."

" Yet, you may—you ought to rejoice—in courtesy rejoice to see her, my son," said the abbot; " for my prescience leads me to dis-

cover, that she has hither led into the way of temptation a fair novice of her order; not, alas! the lovely Alvina, but another, of equal fame in beauty, to fulfil an engagement with a certain *boleristo*, who may be found beneath this *capa*."

Fauconberg, surprised and agitated, almost out of all self-possession, by this mask's apparent knowledge of his transactions with the community of Santa Barbara, seemed to forget the awkwardness of evincing preference, where preference was not to actuate the substitute of another; and resting his eyes upon Alethea, appeared unmindful of the clew presented by the abbot, preparing his bows and homage for her; when the General softly whispered him:—

" Though fancy may lead you to our professed sister, engagement claims you for our novice. Veiled and masked, you must take the engaged of the truant *engagée*, for your partner, until the forms of her order permit her presenting an unclouded face to the unim-

peded gaze of the surrounding multitude. The hour of adjournment to the refectory, is that decreed by our lady abbess for this display."

"But I am too proud of the honour conferred upon the substitute of Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, by this fair novice, to receive it under a mask," said Fauconberg, gallantly taking off his vizard, and dismantling, ere he took the hand of Miss De la Warr, and led her to join the *corps du ballet*.

The first moment in which Fauconberg found an opportunity for the question, he requested to know from his lovely partner, "if she were at liberty to reveal to him the name of the abbot of her order?"

"My order," she replied, "is secrecy."

"May you inform me, even, if he is a native of the country of which he wears the pontificals?"

"Why, I think I may safely pronounce a negative; for though he threw off with such fluency in the Spanish language, to mislead

your recognition, he addressed me in the more pleasing (at least to my patriotic ears) accents of my own beloved country."

"Indeed!" returned Fauconberg—"who can he be?"

"Why, a very odd sort of man," responded Olivia—"a sort of dealer in necromancy; one that finds out by one glance what will exactly redound to your benefit; and however unpalatable it may at first appear to your taste, he gives it magic to charm your judgment, and become the most congenial to your relish."

At this moment Maréchal Blucher came forward, in high martial style, "to request the honour of waltzing with the fairest daughter of England, in Miss Olivia de la Warr."

"Alas! most renowned Maréchal," Olivia replied, "the lady your gallantry has raised to the superlative, is compelled to decline the honour you so flatteringly intended for her; not being permitted by the guardians

of her bearings to waltz, even with Maréchal Blucher."

" Whew ! ew ! ew !" sounded out the Maréchal, in shrill tones, that made Olivia start. " We does not dance the superlatives in Prussia, nor in Paris neither, as I know of ; so that dance is out of my catoclog, miss : and as your head, you say, cannot bear waltzing, shall be proud of the honour of leading you out in a bolero, or a fandango, or — dang it ! let us have the fandango. I'll bring my castonets, ere you could sound ' to boots and saddles,' miss."

" Are you not an adept in some dance more appropriate to the dignity of Maréchal Blucher than the fandango ?" said Fauconberg.

" What !" responded the personification of the gallant Maréchal — " the Waterloo courante ! But, dang it, that cannot be managed as a *pas seul*. I must have a partner, by the bugles ! Come, miss, if you will be Wellington, blow me ! but we will make the French

forces of quadrillers fly before us, in *le pas tombé*, and *le pas battu*."

"I have not courage for Wellington," returned Olivia.

"But I have," exclaimed a Circassian nymph, most alluringly attired. "I accept the challenge, and will enter the field of Terpsichore with the brave Maréchal."

The Circassian nymph now offered her ready hand, which Daniel, in the boyish hope of putting the quadrille dancers, if not to the rout, at least into confusion, by the introduction of an *allemand* into the midst of them; and issuing his orders and signals to the musicians, off he pranced with his bold companion.

But, although the undaunted Daniel did not put the surprised forces of Terpsichore to the rout, he certainly struck them motionless, through astonishment; and cessation once effected, the attention of all became fixed, by the grotesque manner in which the merry Maréchal performed his *pas grave*, his *contre-temps*, his *jetté*, and *entrechat à quatre*, in his

huge military jack-boots ; but when he came to *la cabriole en avant, en arrière, ou de côté*, he manœuvred one leg out of one boot, and the other out of its fellow, and with genuine Harlequin dexterity, disgorged himself from his weight of military glory, which had seemed sinking him beneath a constellation of Fame's trophies, and appeared at once as the hero of the pantomimic drama, accommodated with his characteristic partner, in the *accommodable* Circassian.

The fame of this exploit was soon blazoned forth throughout the festive scene, and very shortly drew Boniface and Cherry to the scene of Daniel's exhibition ; the latter extremely disconcerted at the rudeness of her unmanageable boy, in terminating the quadrille in so unceremonious a manner, and without remembering the respect due to his father's guests ; but the former in a state of indignant ire that foils description, at the gallant Maréchal Blucher having been turned into a buffoon in his house ; and so vehemently was the indignation of this professional enthusiast ex-

pressed, that the discomfited Daniel was compelled to make good a retreat, and take shelter in the grand seignior's magnificence, from his father's wrath.

The fair community from Rosindale monastery having announced themselves to their host and hostess early in the evening, they received a large proportion of their assiduities, as well as those of their sons ; Prince le Boo seldom straying from Miss De la Warr's side, save when attention to some particular guests arbitrarily called him away to aid his parents, or to join the dancers ; whilst, as to the diversified fancies of Mr. Daniel, his Proteus forms seemed to have been adopted, for the express purpose of amusing our convent ; for all his transmutations were first exhibited before them ; and Ovid himself scarcely presented a greater number of metamorphoses to the world. But, unlike the Proteus of old, Daniel was not gifted with power to elude the grasp ; since, come before our party in whatsoever shape he might, let such an appendage be appropriate, or otherwise, the evidently capti-

vated Circassian had hooked her arm upon his; often subjecting herself to a sudden unceremonious shake-off, when she impeded the action of his arms in any of the high flourishing of his gesticulations.

And so palpable was the adulation of this enamoured *incognita*, who seemed fully resolved upon concealing herself from all impertinent recognition, that Olivia, who appeared Daniel's first object to delight, took an opportunity of alluding to the conquest he had so unquestionably made; advising him, however, to prevail upon her to unmask, before he ventured with her into her captivating regions.

"Oh! never fear, miss," he responded — "wait a bit, and you will see the best character I performs to-night, is 'Will-o-the-wisp.' By the bugles! the Sircashonbur thinks, when fortune chucked the Lancefields down from their proper speer, he took all nouce from their noddles. But I have still pennytaceon to know her for the enemy as I have sworn vengeance again. But she does not

know me, miss. She takes me for an unfledged pigeon; but in wit, at least, she shall find me no portwigle."

It was in one of these often repeated revolutions of the family satellites around our Rosindale planets, when Nettlethorp too had, with Marchmont, joined the Spanish forces, that Sir Cornelius complaining loudly of the heat, Nettlethorp expressed his wonder at Boniface having covered his head so snugly, when aware of the active part he had undertaken.

" He uncover his head, your honour!" exclaimed Cherry. " Why, bless you, he misses his helmet so, that *sur ma vie!* but I question if he would doff the covering of his enlightened noddle for his Majesty, or the Duke of Wellington, or even for General De la Warr his ownself."

" Indeed," said Julius, mildly, " my father is so anxious to preclude ' the winds of heaven from visiting his head too roughly,' and so addicted to what he considers the bewitching fumes of the pipe, that I almost

tremble in apprehension, lest in the enthusiasm of these passions, he may one day turn Mussulman."

"Dang it, father, let it be oysterman," exclaimed Daniel, in amazement at his brother's grovelling apprehension; "but no need to turn hawker of either, I fancy, for the gain of a nightcap, or a'bacco pipe."

"Boy, boy! you will be the ruin of all!" exclaimed Nettlethorp, angrily. "Sir Cornelius, a word with ——"

And this word was kindly and judiciously given, in persuasion to send Daniel, without delay, to some highly polished and well informed clerical man; to whom the wealthy Baronet could make it worth while to devote his time to polishing the mind and manners of his wild boy; a proposition to which Sir Cornelius at length acceded, when it was afterwards warmly recommended by General De la Warr; but persuading Daniel into acquiescence in this wise counsel was reserved for the higher influence of Will Bird and Miss *Oliviär De la Warr*.

At length, Cherry announcing to the lady abbess of our convent, “ that the moment for adjournment to the banquet was at hand, and to which she would return, to conduct her by a private passage, to avoid the pressure of the multitude of thronging guests ; ” the abbot-general, suddenly seizing the arm of Fauconberg, drew him aside from their party, and in a cautious whisper thus addressed him : —

“ Have you no need for a father of the cowl for making shrifts to ? Nothing to confess of indignation, awakened by the ungraciousness and ingratitude with which your noble generous heart has been stung ? Nothing of the ungraciousness of a proud Castilian, whose life you saved at peril of your own ? Nothing of the ingratitude of a native of this isle, whose life you also saved, at peril to your own existence, but who requited you with a harsh reprimand ? ”

“ I know not — I remember not, what you thus so strangely allude to,” exclaimed Fauconberg, recoiling indignantly from his contact. “ Are you not truly ill in mind, Foster ? ”

But the abbot firmly resumed his grasp with one hand, and with the other removing his mask, discovered the fine countenance of General De la Warr, who, resuming his own voice and national language, impressively said:—

“ But I remember all that concerns myself, dear Fauconberg. It is full time for my unmasking both face and mind for you. Yet this is not a spot for unburdening an overflowing heart. I have much, very much, to say to my preserver, upon old and new subjects; and to-morrow you shall become my father confessor, Fauconberg.”

Now, following their party, which had commenced their route, under the escort of the nimble Cherry, they reached an antechamber, belonging to the great hall of banquet; and where the lady abbess issuing her permission for her daughters to uncloud, Miss De la Warr was ready to receive the protection of Fauconberg, with a face uncovered, as the General said:—

“ Protect this wild plant for me, Albert,

whilst I pay my respects, and make my congratulations to my worthy and long esteemed Lady Lancefield; whom I perceive my unexpected appearance, amid her motley revellers, has much astonished."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE loquacious Cherry, elevated to the highest altitude to which fortune had yet exalted her, by honouring her hand with a place under the arm of General De la Warr, now harangued and shrugged her shoulders, as she exploded her *feu de joie* of rapturous amazement, “ at the unexpected surprise of finding their gallant General in the stately abbot’s shoes ;” and many a *parbleu*, and *sur ma vie*, &c. &c. were uttered in the introduction of wishes, that her dear boy Julius, for he had at last succeeded in obtaining his true nomination from his mother, was at hand, for the honour of an introduction to their brave General ; and to have the post conferred on him, of ambassador to break this welcome arrival to his father, who, she feared, would forget himself for joy, and dip too heedlessly, if not into the Lake of Geneva, into the wines

of France, in attestation of his rapture. By the time our party reached the hall of banquet, all the entrance doors to which were opened at the same moment, she appeared so elated by the honour which had led her thither, that she seemed well to sanction the name assigned by the *bels esprits* of the revel to her active character, of Cherry Bounce; and to have acquired, by her superlative consequence, courage for setting at nought the sneers and jeers of even the most satirical of those she entertained.

Nettlethorp kindly undertook the embassy, to break to Sir Cornelius the unexpected honour conferred upon his roof; but, strange to say, the honour for which the poor Baronet had been so anxious, as a smile of fate that would fill his cup of happiness to the brim, appeared at once to subdue his every faculty. Motionless, and speechless, and looking wholly scared, he stood gaping at Nettlethorp, with rays of supplication darting from his eyes, “to save him from mighty honours he knew not how to meet.”

"At length he articulated, combating for breath, "I must not, your honour, chuzza for joy; I suppose?" *idly* of stone, *idly* said. "You may give a three times three all-hail at your banquet, if you drink this welcome home," returned Nettlethorp; "but, for dignity's sake, keep the honour you feel for him and others in your mind, Sir Cornelius, and elevate it not to your tongue. Go boldly up to the General, and, with a smile of welcome, take him by the hand."

"What, sir! of my own accord, take our General by the hand!" exclaimed Sir Cornelius, in a *tonet* and with a look of ludicrous consternation. "Zounds! do not look thus dismayed. *ye* I did not tell you to take him by the nose." *be* "But, your hon—sir, I must use the respect of drawing on my gloves, of course." *ppps* "Pshaw! bare-handed, ungloved, man! not hand-muffled. Why that would be the prank of a woman, many of whom consider it bold to present a palm uncovered to a man, except when in the condescension of majesty it is pre-

sented for the homage of a kiss. But, lo ! the General has espied you, and is coming with open hand to greet your restoration to the mansion of your ancestors."

The kind and cordial manner of General De la Warr removed at once much of the poor Baronet's embarrassment; and his penetrating eye developing the state of the case, he, with his usual skill in generalship, in a very few moments contrived to place his host at comparative ease.

At length dancing was recommenced, and soon Olivia, finding herself unequal to further exertion as a dancer, proposed to her party making a circuit of the range of superbly illuminated apartments.

Many amusing incidents our party encountered in this perambulation, though of no importance to our history of the night; until, in the conservatory, they at length perceived, beneath the shade of some umbrageous trees, the fair Circassian, cautiously employed, as if she felt secure from observation, despoiling

her dress of its valuable ornaments, and confiding them to the care of another female, who like herself had continued her mask.

At the moment the attention of our party was attracted by this incident, Daniel, now as Romeo, darted to the side of Olivia, and, in a whisper, desired her to observe the enemy, disposing of her valuables.

"What can that be for?" demanded Olivia.
"Is your cruelty in the act of consigning her to sackcloth and ashes?"

"No, faith, miss; but her own villany may do something like it, ere many hours pass. No, bless you, she is preparing for a march to Gretnar Green with me. Rat her! I touch her, wicked warlet, with a pair of tongues! much less tie her to me for a wife! But I have a countermarch in orders for her. Blow me, if I ha'n't! She little dreams of the Will-o-the-wisp *in petto* for her, that will lead her through swamps and marches, till she saves herself from his clutches, by making a confession of her rascally exploit—a backbiting d—l!"

"I know nothing of what you allude to," said Olivia; "but beware she prove not too many for you. If a certain betraying air does not deceive me, she bears a dagger in her arms."

"The very same," returned Dan; "but wait, and see the biter bit. I must march off, though, to set my shoulders to the wheel that wheels her off to summer [summary] justice. But I say, *pardì*, Miss Oliviar, we may have a wedding out of it after all; for who knows that she may not pronounce 'a bird in the hand worth two in the bush!'"

And now off ran Daniel, leaving Olivia overwhelmed in astonishment at the Machiavellian spirit, which had led her *ci-devant* friend into the dishonourable attempt of inveigling this apparently simple boy into a marriage with her, who was many years his senior; and after an anxious moment given to a hasty review of all she knew of the matter, her apprehension of Miss Daggerly proving too many for this wild and simple boy, and succeeding in her unjustifiable design, she deter-

mined upon imparting the matter to her uncle; who instantly hastened with the alarming communication to Sir Cornelius, when an immediate hue and cry for Daniel at length brought him to view in the habit of Robin Hood, who, attended by his merry men, had just despatched, in a chaise and four, Miss Daggerly with a Romeo, whom she fully believed to be the fortunate youth she had been attempting to allure; but who, a most fortunate youth in this instance, had developed her design, and had sent off William Bird, his early companion and friend, as his representative.

Daniel gave a brief account of the various causes which had led him on to the infliction of "summer justice" on the delinquent; and neither Sir Cornelius nor General De la Warr finding in themselves any inclination for displeasure at what he had done, they merely reminded him, that by not having consulted more experienced heads than his own, he possibly might involve himself in hostilities with the fair fugitive's male relatives.

"I had the advice of Lawyer Slymore down in the village," returned Daniel. "Why, bless you, Will Bird would not stir a peg in the business till he knowed our taking the coming article off would not obligate me to marry her. So Slymore said, as how, 'she could not even attempt an action for breach of promise, as I had a letter in her own handwriting, enticing me from my parents' roof to go off with her to Gretnar Green.' As to male folks, I was not the one to be afeared of them, in my wish for bringing the backbiting wench to shame. Lawyer Slymore himself has wrote the paper as we resolved she should sign to clear Miss De la Warr from all them there henhouse [heinous] matters she planned in Will Bird's hearing, to lay to Miss Oliviar's charge."

The General, alarmed upon Olivia's account, requested to know all Daniel alluded to that was of consequence to her.

"Why, please your hon—why, sir—sir, Will Bird, being nation eager, that is, wery

anxious, to see how I would behave dancing amongst gentlefolks, that is, in strange company, went and hid himself behind the molasses images [colossus statues] in the saloon, where mother Daggerly and her grinning stirical friend were retired to hold a council of war. And not at first seeing, and after, when they did spy Will within ear-shot, not up to his understanding the lingo through his long station in and about Paris, far better than they did, they settled it all out in French, as how they would watch their opportunity of blackening the bright angel Miss De la Warr to Sir Frederick Bolingbroke, as they see was, like other folks as had eyes, deep in love with her. So Will, your hon—sir—having a nation mind to see all the go of it, never lost sight on them, and under the hambush of the molasses images follows them at last into the consolatory; and there, rat them! hears the whole volley of their lies shot off through the ears of Sir Frederick; and Will, making a random [memorandum] of the whole volley

when he gets home, what does he do but gives all their jaw, as if upon oath, to Mr. Slymore, as his neat deposition against them."

General De la Warr, after most cordially acknowledging his gratitude to Olivia's enthusiastic champion, inquired when and where the culprit was to be released from the fangs of summary justice; as he felt, as guardian to Miss De la Warr, he ought to be present when the base defamer was compelled to confess her enormity?

"The time, and place, please your—sir—depend upon the backbiting jade herself," responded Daniel. "Will takes her just far enough to shame her, and make her, for her own sake, to cry for mercy; even to the barracks at M., where his brother Jim is quartered, and in whose room he billets her, till Lawyer Slymore makes her smite her own fame with her own hand — rat her!"

"Dan! Dan!" cried Sir Cornelius, "I fear this is going too far with taliation. You should not blast the woman's character, boy."

"Why not?" retorted Daniel. "What

compunctione had she in blacking Miss De la Warr to the hue as suited her defaming tongue; nor in her endeavour to cheat you out of the right of disposing of your own infant, as Mr. Slymore, in the funny humours of the law, styles your hopeful?"

"It is true, that though your retaliation is harsh, it is merited," said the General. "However, let us, as true Englishmen, lean to the side of mercy, and send off a couple of your elderly female domestics, under proper escort, to chaperon the delinquent in the barracks, until Mr. Slymore has the jail-delivery signed."

This being General De la Warr's advice, was instantly obeyed as a command. And this conference having occupied much time, when the General rejoined his party, he found Mrs. Manners so subdued by fatigue, and so anxious to retire, that he immediately ordered the carriage up for their departure.

When Fauconberg, after escorting the Rosindale community to their coach, returned to that scene of hilarity from which he longed to

fly; it was no easy task to recall his attention to passing events, from the abstraction in which General De la Warr's allusions to Santa Barbara and Alvina had involved him; yet, as he passed from the entrance hall towards the saloon, a figure flitting before him did awaken and rivet his attention, for it was clad in a *fac-simile* of the costume in which Lady Alvina had escaped from Santa Barbara with her uncle—that of a *gitano* youth.

But although the vast difference of height and corresponding bulk in figure, with other circumstances, presented instant conviction of this not being Lady Alvina; yet, the mere similitude of costume awakened so much interest as to accelerate the speed of Fauconberg, and to give him a bounding heart to assimilate with the quickened step, which led him to overtake the gitano at the door of the saloon.

The gitano suddenly stopped, and, with a bow of homage, exclaimed in the gitano dialect—

" Health and wealth to you ! I know your honour."

" And I think I know you," replied Fauconberg, in augmenting agitation. " Those accents tell me I am not deceived, when I pronounce you son to a gitano female, to whom my gratitude is debtor."

" Not to Philip's right eye, but to the right understanding of an intrepid hero—these ;" said the gitano, emphatically, as he took a letter from his bosom, and placed it in the now trembling hand of Fauconberg.

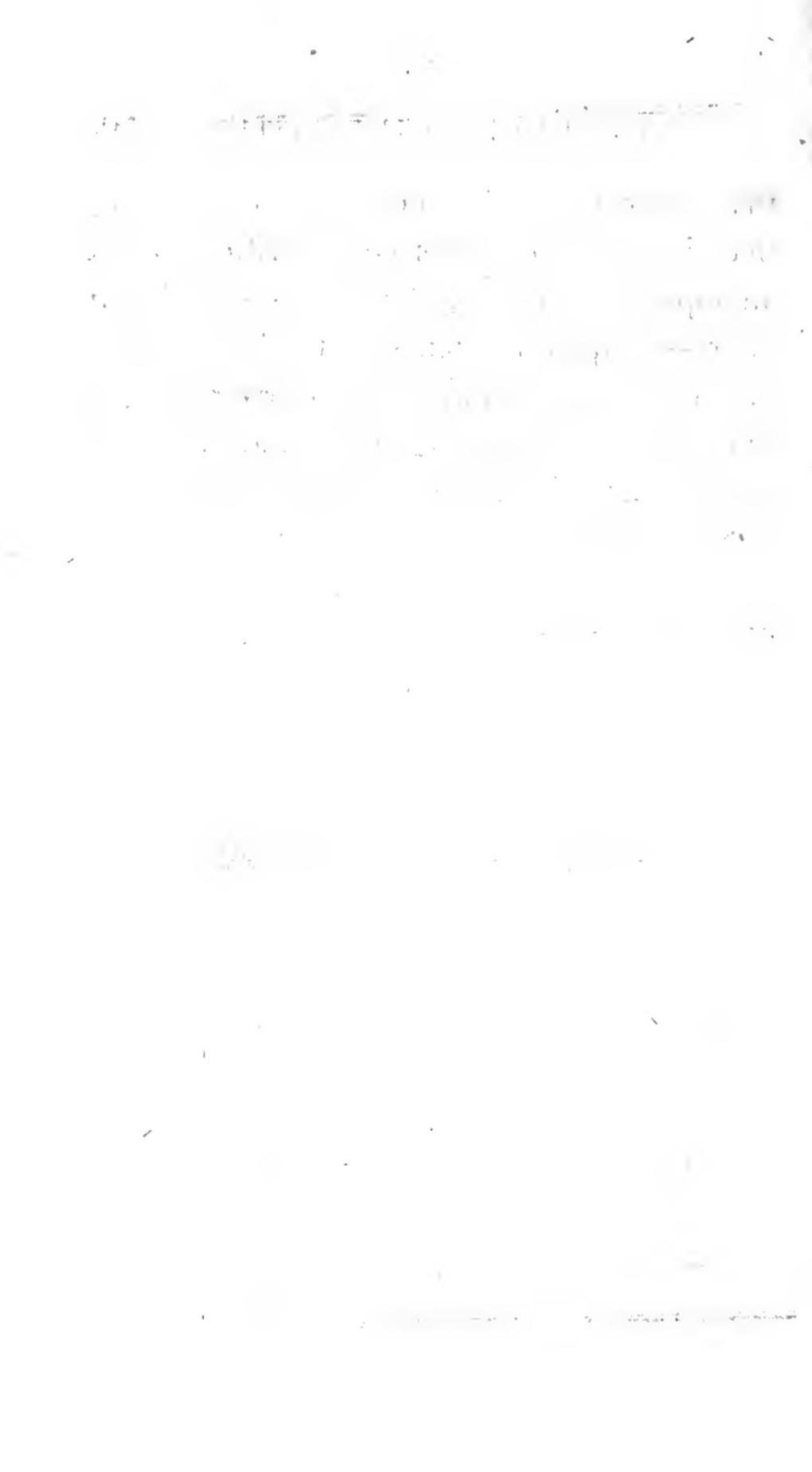
In this moment an immense throng of revellers came rushing from the hall of banquet, some to seek their carriages, some to enter the saloon, from whence a numerous party at the same moment were emerging. In the sudden and impetuous conflux, the gitano and Fauconberg were separated, to meet no more that night ; and after Albert had sought this mysterious stranger in every direction, but in vain, he turned to the letter, in the hope of obtaining from that some explanation of

this interesting adventure: and now, to aid that interest, he perceived it written, as he anticipated, in the very characters so indelibly impressed upon his memory, which had traced the billet borne to him by the unerring dart, to warn him of impending peril, the last night he had passed in his forlorn hope, in the valley of Santa Barbara.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

LONDON :

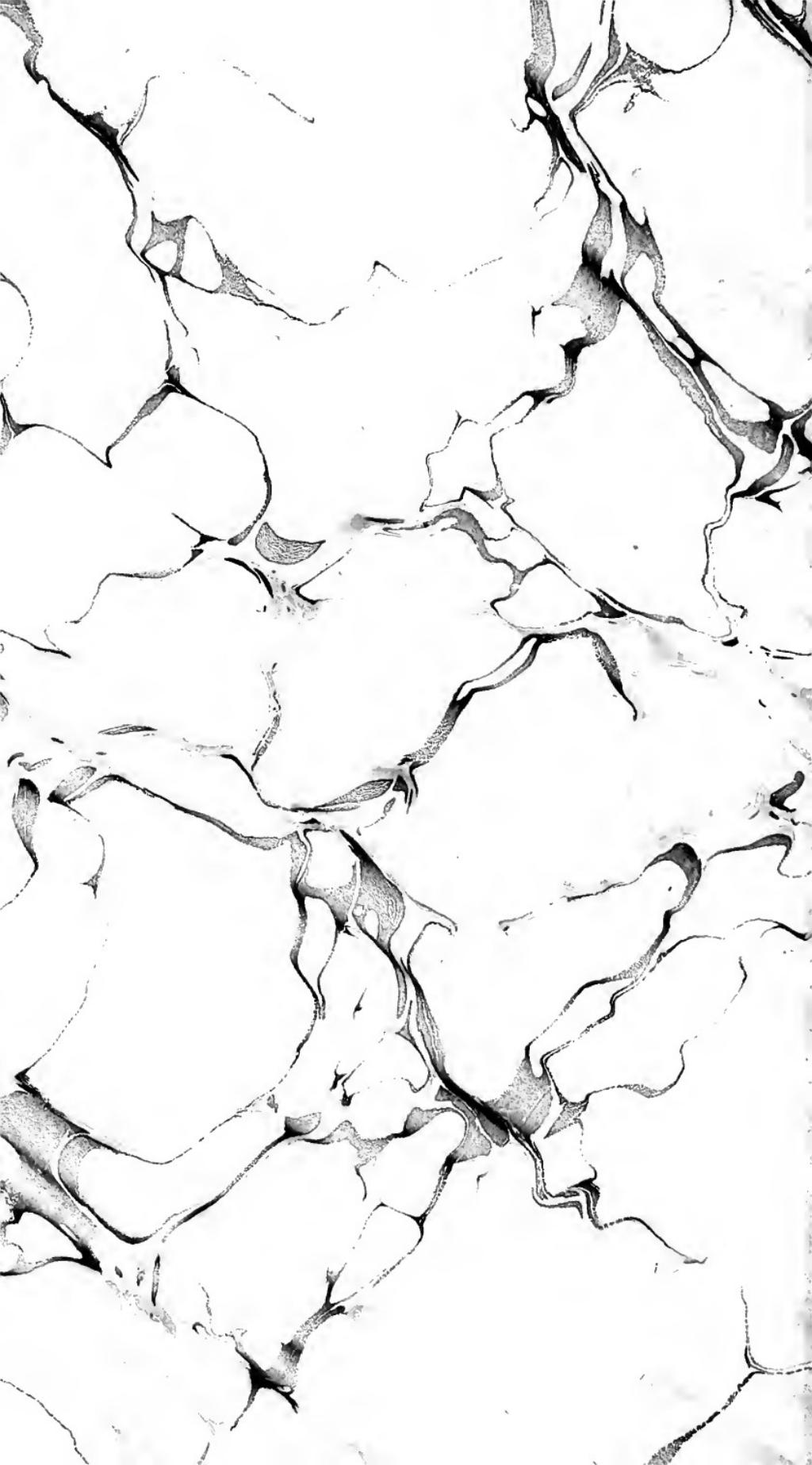
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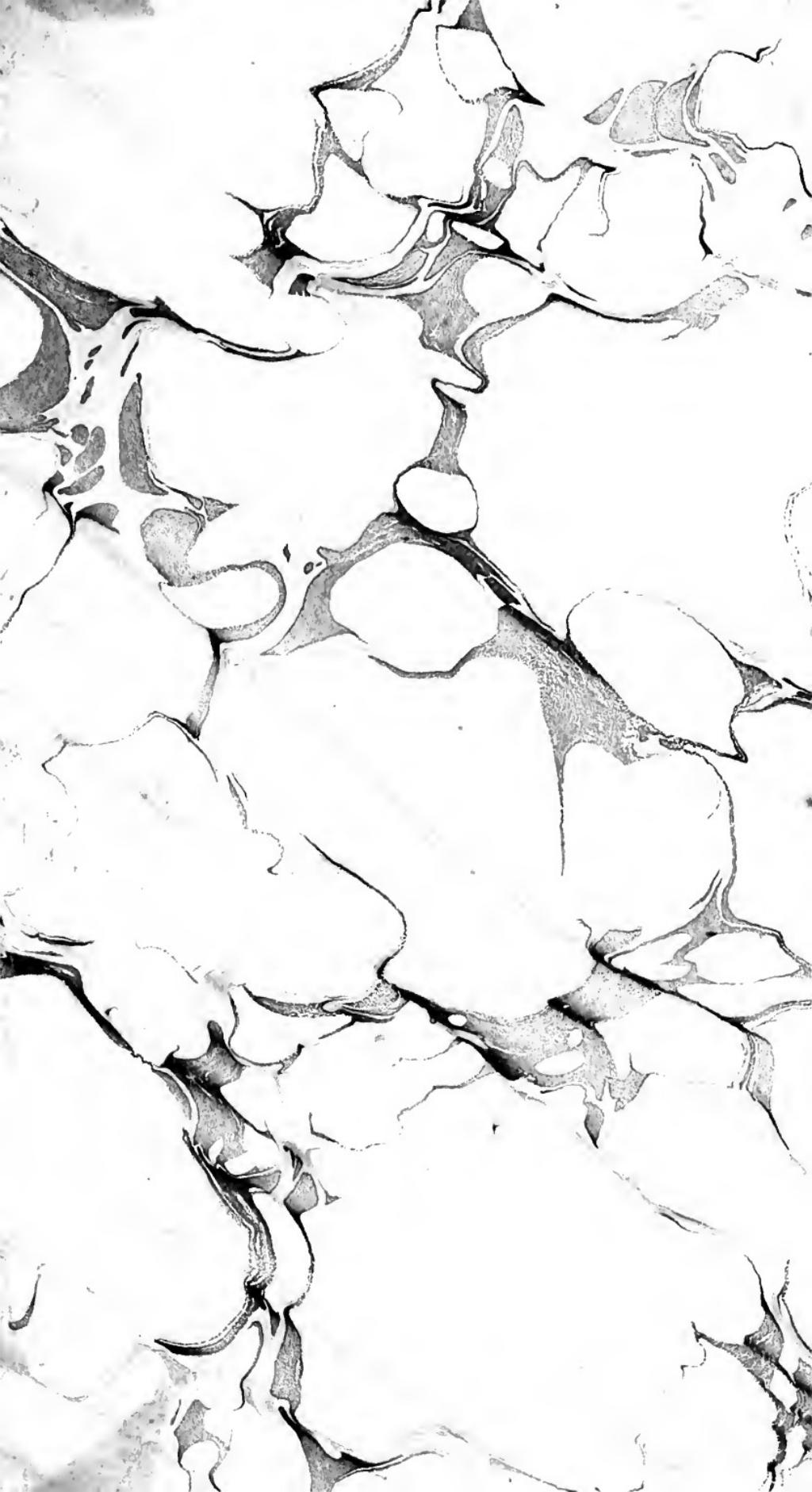












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